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Contents

The Week 338

Editorials

Big Business and Planning 340
What Porto Rico Needs 341
The Communists and the Scottsboro Case 343

General Articles

The House of the Future ..... Douglas Haskell 344
A Portrait of James Joyce ..... Padraic Colum 346
A Dirge for College Liberalism ..... William Harlan Hale 348
Chain Stores: Menace or Promise? V ..... John T. Flynn 350
In Defense of the American Standard ..... Murray Godwin 353
The Last Days of Alice (verse) ..... Allen Tate 354
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 355
"Oedipus Rex," Cocteau and Stravinsky ..... Paul Rosenfeld 356
Respectable Productions ..... E. W. 357

Correspondence 358

Reviews of Books

Black Houyhnhnms ..... Ramon Guthrie 359
Mr. Keynes's Recipe for Stabilization. George Soule 360
Death in the Suburbs ..... John Chamberlain 361
Wanted: A Biographer ..... Frederick L. Schuman 363
Book Notes 363

The Week

PRESIDENT Hoover has again done something which both he and Mr. Coolidge have been fond of doing—he has given Europe some good advice. Speaking at the first session of the International Chamber of Commerce, he urged a reduction of armament in the interest of a business revival. Reduction of armament is a good idea, but when it is recommended by a President of the United States, it has to be considered in the light of certain additional facts. In the first place, nothing is more irritating to Europeans than to be lectured about the peace problem by an American President, since they are convinced that we are not doing our proper share in solving the problems which we helped to create by our participation in the War. It is therefore certain in advance that such moral exhortations will have no practical effect. In the second place, there is an obvious gap between what Mr. Hoover says in his speeches, and what he does when his government participates in an international conference for limiting armament—as for instance, that of London. Third, no competent economist would agree with Mr. Hoover that the burden of armament is the most important cause of the world depression, or even one of the two or three most important causes. Substantially the same burden has been carried during the past ten years, through good times as well as bad. France and Russia, which at present have the largest standing armies, are the two countries which have suffered least from the depression. Fourth, there is a native absurdity in a speech about the depression which leaves out such important factors as tariffs, war debts, monetary and credit policies, consumptive power of wage earners, and lack of regulated production. Mr. Hoover let it be known before the I. C. of C. met that he would view with disfavor any discussion of the American high-tariff policy and refusal to cancel or further reduce the war debts. In discussing land armaments (carefully minimizing the vexed question of navies) he picked out the one international subject left to him in view of his own inhibitions. It was indeed, as one newspaper commentator called it, "a smart trick"; but it was the sort of smart trick which does not add to his reputation in the eyes of thoughtful men.

THE present administration is pursuing a general policy toward aliens which would delight the most fanatical member of the Ku Klux Klan. It has almost entirely suspended immigration, which was already cut down to 153,000 by the quota law—doing so under an ingenious if not ingenuous interpretation of the proviso forbidding entry to persons likely to become "public charges" and arguing that in these hard times almost anybody is subject to that possibility. The policy of controlling immigration on a basis of the opportunities open is of course a sensible one, though the means taken are dubious. One of Mr. Hoover's bright young men has dug up a forgotten statute saying that any alien who has been here less than three years and doesn't like it may have a free ride back home at the government's expense, and despite a threatened Treasury deficit of a billion dollars or more, funds are to be made accessible for this purpose. Most important of all, Secretary Doak

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is using deportation on a wholesale basis as a weapon against radicalism. The legality of his procedure is sharply criticized in one of the special reports of the Wickersham Commission, which says that the Constitution is being violated in many cases. Mr. Doak is a radical-baiter of the school of Palmer, the "fighting Quaker" (on whose slogan so many embarrassing puns used to be made). He all but admits that he had rather deport a Communist illegally than not at all; and it is well known that his recent actions have the approval of the administration as a whole. It would be an excellent thing if his policies and activities were made the subject of searching investigation by the Senate in the next session of Congress. The humiliation caused by world-wide reprobation of Palmer's activities a decade ago is too fresh in memory to cause anybody to want a repetition.

THE suggestion that the world wheat market ought to be regulated by the same means which have been applied to sugar—that the several wheat-producing countries agree upon import and export quotas so that the price may be maintained somewhere above an average cost of production—is a sensible and logical one. Unfortunately it is much more difficult to execute. Production and export of sugar is in a relatively few strong hands, but production of wheat is, in most countries, carried on by many thousands of individual farmers or peasants who have not learned how to restrict output. The suggestion appears to us valuable chiefly for the light which it throws upon the absurd international hostilities which the collapse of the world wheat market has aroused. To blame Russian exports for the low prices, as some in this country have been doing, or to blame American exports, as some Europeans have been doing, is to overlook the fact that all exporting countries contribute to the surplus, and there is no ground for blaming any of them unless it is first agreed how much each should, in the best interests of world economy, be allowed to ship. Until we can do that, and enforce our decision, each nation must meet its own situation as best it can.

MAYOR Cermak starts off very badly indeed on his great campaign to clean up Chicago. His first official action is to announce that plays and movies showing the city as infested with gangsters may not be exhibited to its citizens. If this represents Mayor Cermak's general intellectual level, he should feed himself a couple of pineapples. Does he think Chicagoans don't know the reputation their town has? And that if they learn of it, they will rush out en masse to buy themselves machine guns and get in on the racket? Or does he suspect they will grow vainglorious over the attention they are getting from the rest of the world, and insist that Mr. Capone and his confreres shall continue to do business at the old stand in order to make good on Hollywood's advertising? On the contrary, if he really wants to build up public sentiment against gangdom, as he says, he ought to encourage screen and stage to portray the Horrors of the Loop, and pass an ordinance requiring each householder to attend one such exhibition daily.

MAY 10 is "Mothers' Day," and the occasion has been seized by the medical men for a little healthy propaganda on behalf of better care for mothers in childbirth. They point out again the well known fact that the United States has the highest maternal mortality rate of any civilized country in the world, with at least two score nations which do better than we. Our present annual loss is said to be 16,000, and the doctors argue that at least 10,000 of these mothers could be saved, pointing for proof to an experiment by the Maternity Center Association in New York City, which conducted an educational campaign among expectant mothers in a poor and thickly populated district of the city, provided medical and nursing service, and reduced the death rate two-thirds. What the doctors do not mention is that many of these mothers whose lives were saved probably could not have afforded to pay, on the ordinary commercial basis, for the service they received. Maternal mortality is a disease of poverty and of the ignorance which goes with poverty. America's shockingly bad record is created by high death rates among the poor in cities, among Negroes, Mexicans and other similar groups. Our prosperous Nordic communities, however, have a maternal death rate about as low as is found anywhere in the world.

THERE is an interesting corollary to this problem which is receiving public attention just now. Ever since the invention of anesthetics, people have tried from time to time to reduce or eliminate the pain which usually accompanies childbirth. Before the War, the scopolamin treatment, "twilight sleep," was developed in Germany and received great attention. More recently there has been developed a new technique, known as the "Gwathmey method," which is free from the more serious objections raised against "twilight sleep" and other forms of anesthesia. This method has been in use for some years in a number of the country's leading hospitals, which report a satisfactorily small number of deaths of either mother or baby under its use. The procedure has recently been made the subject of a popular book ("Easier Motherhood," by Constance L. Todd) and has been much discussed in newspapers.

ALTHOUGH the Gwathmey method is making some headway, and has the approval of the medical authorities as a whole, it still meets with great resistance, most of which is apparently due to inertia and indifference on the part of busy doctors who do not like to learn new techniques any more than do the rest of us. Hundreds of thousands of

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mothers still suffer excruciating agony, much of it needless, because of sheer geographical accident: they happen to live where the method has not yet come into general use, or by chance they engage a physician who has not "got around to trying it." Active public curiosity about the new method will undoubtedly have a healthy effect. Incidentally, among those who ought to be interested are the deplorers who are always weeping because college men and women, and other supposedly superior groups in the population, have so few babies. Everyone knows that with knowledge of birth control now universal, fear of the ordeal of childbirth is an important element in reducing the number of children born to these people who, as we are always hearing, are just the ones who should be the fathers and mothers of the next generation.

PERHAPS nowhere are the issues of public-utility regulation more clear cut at present than in reactionary Connecticut, where Republican Boss J. Henry Roraback, entrusted by the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia with the duty of maintaining the profitable status quo, is successfully rebuffing the attempts of Wilbur L. Cross and his Democratic followers to obtain progressive public-utility legislation. The present General Assembly rejected the three Cross bills carrying progressive features which are on the statutes of most other states. In a reactionary moment, it purged the Connecticut law of a provision whereby 100 electors might institute proceedings against the Public Utilities Commission for neglect of duty, a provision under which Albert Levitt, Connecticut's independent Republican reformer, has a case pending in the courts. Finally, the General Assembly following Boss Roraback's orders, rejected the Cross nomination of Yale Professor Richard J. Smith, recognized expert, to the Public Utility Commission to succeed Commissioner Alsop. Governor Cross can only take his case to the people—a difficult, expensive and time-consuming process, as to whose results there are no guarantees.

Big Business and Planning

AS THE DISCUSSION of national planning continues, it is significant that more attention is being paid to it by engineers and even by business men than by the great majority of academic economists. The Taylor Society last week devoted its whole meeting in Philadelphia to a consideration of planning, from the individual plant to the national market and even the international field. A few speakers before the United States Chamber of Commerce at Atlantic City ventured timidly into this realm. But the average economist shakes his head over the difficulties. The reason is not far to seek. Economic theory has been built up on the assumption that the business world is made up chiefly of a very large number of independent, competitive units. To speak of planning and control for such a composite seems like reaching for the moon. The economist will readily admit that planning is logical under a socialist order, but he is usually doubtful of approaching it except by way of a highly problematical revolution. In this he is in substantial agreement with the revolutionist himself—except that the latter regards the revolution as being certain to come sooner or later. Both have a mental picture of the capitalist world which originates in the same sources—the picture first drawn in the days of Adam Smith when that world really was molecular, and universal competition was the rule.

A paper in the March number of The American Economic Review, by Gardiner C. Means, based upon extensive research under the auspices of the Columbia Social Science Research Council, shows, however, that the traditional picture is startlingly incorrect, and is becoming more so every day. Everybody realizes that this is the era of the big corporation, but few understand how complete and rapid the process of integration has been.

Without going into the technical details, it is possible to report Mr. Means's main findings as follows. Two hundred corporations, each with assets of over $85,000,000, in 1927 directly controlled over 44 percent of the assets of all non-financial corporations in the country, numbering 302,993. These same two hundred corporations probably received well over 40 percent of the total corporate income. They probably controlled over 35 percent of the total business wealth, if we include unincorporated business as well. They even had between 15 and 25 percent of the total wealth in the nation, taking account of such things as farm land and improvements, residential land and houses, personal property, automobiles and all the property of governmental units.

Not only is this true, but the two hundred big concerns have been growing much more rapidly than the medium-sized and little ones. Between 1909 and 1927 their assets increased at the rate of 5.3 percent a year, while the assets of the other hundreds of thousands of corporations grew at the rate of 2 percent. During the latter part of this period, or between 1924 and 1927, the two hundred largest companies grew 7.3 percent a year, while the rest grew at the rate of 2.3 percent. The growth of the giant concerns was between two and three times as fast as that of all other non-financial corporations; it was still faster than the growth of all other business wealth and of the national wealth as a whole. The tendency undoubtedly continued, if indeed it was not intensified, after 1927.

This growth was not, as would superficially be supposed, the result principally of mergers. It came also from a predominance in corporate saving and in the issuance of securities. The giants saved and reinvested a larger proportion of their incomes than did the smaller concerns. They received the proceeds of between 65 and 75 percent

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of all the publicly marketed corporate securities issued for the purpose of raising new capital. More than half of the gain in wealth of the two hundred largest corporations between 1922 and 1927 came from the issuance of securities, about a quarter from their own savings, and about a quarter from mergers with or among smaller companies.

The huge unit must now be thought of as the typical or representative firm, and certainly as the dominant type. Competition, of course, still exists, but its nature is radically changed. When two, three, or a half-dozen concerns, rather than thousands, dominate a market, the competitive stimuli and the forces of demand and supply must have quite different results. Both the impulse toward control and the possibility of it become greatly enhanced. "An increasing proportion of production," writes Mr. Means, "is carried on for use and not for sale"—that is, a larger proportion of goods is used by the producing organization itself in the process of making further goods. And a large section of industry "is carried on under the ultimate control of a handful of individuals." Less than two thousand men were directors of the two hundred large corporations in 1927, and of these many were inactive. If a few hundred men wanted to do so, and knew how, they could effectively plan almost half of our productive activity. With the exposition of these facts Mr. Means stops. The implications, however, would fill volumes, and it is impossible not to draw a few brief conclusions.

Of course there are large and important areas which are a long distance from any such possibility of concentration, where the relatively small enterpriser is still prevalent. Among these are agriculture, bituminous coal, building, textiles, women's shoes. We used to say that this was true of retail trade, but that is rapidly changing, with the chain store, the department store and the mail-order house. These facts indicate, however, that in other fields where it has flourished the large corporation is even more predominant than in relation to business as a whole.

The fact that legal concentration of control exists does not, of course, mean that this control is being utilized for socially desirable ends, or even that it is organized on the basis of any conception of general planning at all. While planning is practised as an interior technical necessity of single companies, those who direct the policies of these companies toward the outside world are still imbued chiefly with individualistic, acquisitive and competitive ideas. While they may have the power to bring order out of economic chaos, that chaos still exists. And of course any attempt to organize a general plan would shortly be harassed and limited by the absence of centralized authority in important fields like farming, soft-coal mining, building and textiles. Nevertheless, it is impossible to deny that the agencies through which general planning might be executed are already very largely in being and are steadily growing more powerful. They are now being administered for some purpose or other. The way they are administered deeply affects the general economic life. It is no longer possible to say that everything which happens to us is the outcome of the behavior of an immense number of uncontrollable units operating under a series of impersonal "economic laws." Our fate is more and more the result of conscious choices on the part of relatively few—or of failure on the part of these few to exercise choice.

Under these circumstances, the obstacles to a socialized society are due not so much to the absence of the requisite administrative agencies, and of the ability to operate sufficiently large units, as they are to obsolete institutions and ideas. In spite of the growth of great corporations, for instance, we still try, in the interest of the small business man, to prevent "combinations in restraint of trade." We thus make the big fellows fearful of trying to exercise general control except by devious and secret means. No doubt we are right to fear the kind of control they would exercise if unchecked, but we are wrong in discouraging any kind of control at all and in relying upon competition to protect us against them. There is no logical or workable outcome of a centralized industrialism except a planned and socialized society. The battle for an individualistic, laissez-faire economy, self-regulated by competition, is definitely lost. Unless we make that fact the basis of our political and economic thinking, we shall be headed in the wrong direction.

The real question is whether those who now have legal control of the economic system will recognize the necessities of the situation, whether they will be competent to develop the inter-industrial control which is necessary, and whether they will accept the sharing of their powers by government and labor, without which nothing useful can be done. Upon the answer to this question depends their chance of remaining at the helm. So far, big industrialism in the United States has been vigorous, fertile and dominant. If it is any less so in meeting the new requirements implied in its coming of age, its management must change. For while societies have endured strong autocracies for considerable periods, they have never failed in the end to shake off those which became incompetent.

What Porto Rico Needs

THE RECENT visit of President Hoover to Porto Rico was the culmination of strenuous efforts on the part of Governor Roosevelt to bring home to continental Americans how another but far less favored group of Americans live. Considered as a means toward obtaining private or public aid, the publicity gained by the disclosures of undernourishment and disease prevalent on the island was both praiseworthy and desirable. Moreover, Governor Roosevelt's act was unprecedented. Previous

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American Governors had accepted conditions more or less as they had found them and had rested there. In fact a recent Governor considered it more than unwise to expose the island's real condition, as it might "give Porto Rico a bad name" and somehow constitute a reflection on the United States. However, Governor Roosevelt, undaunted by these fears, frankly admitted in his first report to the War Department that the island was confronted by three major problems—disease, poverty and insufficient revenue.

Presented in detailed form, Governor Roosevelt's report draws an even darker picture. The island has a death rate from tuberculosis higher than that of any other place in the Western hemisphere. The death rate from malaria is two and a half times that of the continental United States. There are no adequate facilities to take care of the sick or to prevent the spread of disease. The total hospital facilities, both insular and municipal, for example, provide only 490 beds for consumptives, yet there are not less than 35,000 cases demanding hospital treatment. It is estimated that 600,000 people are suffering from hookworm, a debilitating disease that cuts down the earning capacity of those afflicted from 50 to 75 percent. An attempt to stamp out this plague would require a governmental campaign against soil pollution, which, according to Governor Roosevelt, is "entirely beyond the insular revenues to finance." Moreover, it would also require that shoes were worn generally by the natives to prevent infection and reinfection, but shoes are quite beyond the purse of a large portion of the Porto Rican population.

A visitor to the island is confronted by destitution everywhere. Though Porto Rico is essentially rural, the *jibaro* is by no means an independent farmer. He seldom owns even the ground his hut stands on. In the planting and harvest season he toils for an absentee-owned sugar company, or for a coffee planter at an average wage, counting the inevitable slack seasons, of three dollars a week. The wages of his wife and children may bring the total family income to twice that amount. But he is even worse off than appears, for most of the food he eats is imported from the United States and bought at American-high-standard-of-living prices. The diet he can afford only perpetuates and aggravates his ill health. Actually a large part of Porto Rico's population is chronically on the verge of starvation.

Housing conditions are no better. Over 60 percent of the families are compelled to crowd three or more persons into a room. A great many of the homes are single-room shacks, and half of them house eight or more people. Indeed, eight persons make up an average family in Porto Rico.

Fundamentally, the problem of Porto Rico is overpopulation. Like its concomitant symptoms of indigence, disease and a high mortality rate, the evils of overpopulation are being rapidly aggravated. Though the insular area amounts to 3,670 square miles, three-quarters the size of Connecticut, the population, according to the 1930 census, has jumped to 1,543,913. Thus, the density of population is about twelve times that of the continental United States. But this density is even more serious than the figures indicate, for Porto Rico is not industrial but agricultural, and there are but three cities on the island.

When one examines not merely the increase in population, but the rate at which it is increasing, the problem becomes even graver. In 1899, when Porto Rico became United States territory, the inhabitants numbered 953,243. In the next eleven years the population was increased by 164,769 inhabitants. In the second decade of the century, it increased 181,797. In the decade just concluded, it increased 244,104. A generation ago there were only 259 inhabitants to the square mile seeking to extract a livelihood from the soil, but now there are more than 420.

In the face of these figures, all the well intentioned reforms of Colonel Roosevelt and the aid which his energy and enthusiasm have enlisted, can amount to little, unless he and his Porto Rican collaborators attack the problem of overpopulation. Though the thorough survey made by the Brookings Institution agrees on this point, yet by an apparently supreme effort of restraint it avoids any use of the words "birth control." Presenting as the first of Porto Rico's problems the economic—"how to raise the incomes and the standards of living of her people to something approaching parity with those prevailing in continental United States"—the survey concludes that "so long as the population to be supported increases more rapidly than the means of subsistence there can, of course, be no permanent improvement of Porto Rican living conditions."

Every attempt to ameliorate conditions in Porto Rico must first begin by grappling with the problem of overpopulation. Here is Malthusianism more than demonstrated. Is education to lead the *Portoriqueños* out of economic bondage and out of their heritage of ignorance? The Brookings survey makes plain that not only are the island revenues insufficient to meet the need of the expanding population, but they cannot even provide the necessary increase of educational facilities for the previously existing population. At present 60 percent of the rural population is without school facilities, and this percentage—unless unexpected aid comes from the outside—will inevitably increase.

When it comes to the discussion of the various agencies, social, scientific, philanthropic, religious, which "in the face of appalling poverty and disease . . . are doing their bit," the Brookings survey concludes, with almost a touch of sadness, that their efforts "are but a drop in the bucket," and that "until some change has been wrought in the economic status of the mass of the people, most of the efforts will have a negligible or a temporary influence."

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The Brookings report was written in 1930. Governor Roosevelt arrived in Porto Rico in October, 1929. Since these two events, something of transcendent pertinence and importance has occurred in the United States: Birth control has made a great advance toward respectability! In March, 1931, the Federal Council of Churches—or in other words, organized Protestantism—endorsed the use of contraceptive methods. In April, the New York Academy of Medicine, citadel of conservatism in the medical profession, unqualifiedly recommended the establishment of "birth-control clinics wherever the service is needed," and the teaching of contraception in medical colleges and hospital clinics. A few days later the special commission of the Presbyterian Church which deals with marriage, divorce and remarriage, published a unanimous recommendation by all its fifteen members that the Church at its general assembly late in May should approve the practice of birth control.

Porto Rico, of course, is dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, which still stands officially opposed to contraception. But that church has survived through the centuries largely because it has always shown a marvelous ability to change with the times; and there is excellent evidence that Catholics are in fact practising birth control already—for instance, in Bavaria, Italy and the United States. The Church in Porto Rico might be persuaded to connive at what it could not openly endorse. Certainly the effort should be made, if the inhabitants of that unhappy island are not to sink in a morass of unspeakable misery.

The Communists and the Scottsboro Case

THERE are eight young Negroes in Alabama, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty years, who have been sentenced to be executed in July for a crime which they probably did not commit, after trials the impartiality and justice of which are certainly open to grave question. The circumstances surrounding their conviction were recited in The New Republic of April 29, and we shall not repeat them here. The most significant new fact about their case is the character of the groups which have rallied to their defense.

The Communists, so far as we can piece together the chronology of the case, were first in the field. Shortly after the sentences of death had been passed, they sent investigators to Scottsboro, the scene of the trials, retained lawyers, and undertook to appeal at least one of the cases to a higher court, as a test on behalf of the entire group. They also issued voluminous publicity material from their New York City headquarters, of a type similar to that used in the Sacco-Vanzetti case and other *causes célèbres*.

But in the meantime, other non-Communist groups and individuals were stirred by the plight of these young men, and also undertook to intervene on their behalf; and an acute quarrel at once became evident between the radicals and all the rest. The non-Communists profess to fear that support by the Communists will have a fatal effect; that animosity toward radicals is almost as strong in the South as is the underlying tension between Negroes and whites; and that a case avowedly conducted by the Communists is therefore nearly certain to have an unhappy outcome for the defendants.

Naturally, this accusation hurts the Communists' feelings very much indeed. They point out that when they came to the rescue, no one else was showing much interest in the case, and that the present support from non-Communist quarters is largely the result of their own efforts. When individuals opposed to the Communists persuaded the defendants and some of their parents to sign a statement repudiating the Communists, the latter next day obtained a second statement contradicting the first. Here, for the present the matter rests.

There is, in our opinion, a simple test by which it is possible to tell whether the Communists are concerned to save the lives of these eight young Negroes, or to create propaganda in the interest of their cause in general. In carrying the case to a higher court, it is primarily necessary that competent counsel be employed and sufficient funds be provided for the expenses of the fight. Will the Communists, if they are assured that these things will be done by more conservative groups which do not arouse the same unreasoning prejudice as themselves, withdraw from active participation in the case? They could still, of course, carry on propaganda among their own rank and file, and help to build up the nation-wide interest which is desirable. If they insist on seeking to conduct the fight, and if the defendants are then put to death, they will have incurred a terrible responsibility and one which cannot fail to react unfavorably upon the progress of their own cause in the United States.

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The House of the Future

NOT SO many months ago, builders were quite content to keep on giving you the kind of living quarters you were already getting. Although Colonel Starrett had called building the least efficient industry in the United States —except, possibly, farming—and although President Keppel of the Carnegie Foundation had pointed out the doubling of housing costs during the same period in which the cost of automobiles was cut in half, builders could elaborately prove to you that there was a mysterious difference between cars and homes.

Since then, there have been great changes. During 1929, there was a billion-dollar slump in residential building below the average of the years immediately preceding; and 1930 fell another half-billion below 1929. So it is necessary once more to think from the bottom up in the ancient building trade. Unless housing can be made very much cheaper and better, the mass of the people can afford only the cheapest kind.

It is no idle prophecy to say that the dwelling quarters of the future will differ as radically from those of the present as the cars of today differ from the old-time horse and buggy. It is impossible to tell how soon the change will come, or to give an exact bill of specifications; but it is perfectly possible to lay down the general lines of the advance, which we propose to sketch here.

The House as a Machine

The method is quite simple. Instead of comparing future housing with present housing, let us compare buildings with vehicles for transportation. For example, the ocean liner "Bremen," besides affording every facility of the Empire State Building, is so constructed as to withstand the worst pounding of the Atlantic Ocean. And yet, subjected to a punishment which would crumble the Empire State Building at once, the "Bremen" is so much more efficiently built as to weigh, per cubic foot, about one-twelfth as much. A pullman car performs every service demanded of a house. Ignoring the fact that we should not like to live permanently in pullman cars, it is significant that their walls are only four inches thick, instead of the eight or twelve inches required in all-fireproof house construction; that the windows of a pullman—although they give an infinitely greater expanse of openness and view —are two or three times more weatherproof than house windows; and that the latest pullman cars carry sound insulation and air conditioning which would be unheard of in any sort of dwelling quarters.

Consider, for example, the pullman wall. There is no doubt that the house of the future will adopt its essential features. Being metal, it stops water at the first impact, whereas most brick walls let water right through, so that in a heavy downpour it is not the wall that stops the water, but only the thin shell of tar paper or waterproofing paint on the inside. Metal walls are already in actual use, not only in pullman cars, but in many office buildings, where metal is used in partitions and also for the exterior wall panels under windows, called spandrels. The Empire State Building carries 300 tons of aluminum for this purpose. The difference is that at present most building codes demand that such metal be backed up with masonry twelve inches thick, whereas the metal wall of the future will probably consist of a sheet of insulating material an inch or two thick with a casing of sheet metal on both sides.

But it is no foregone conclusion that all future walls will be metal clad. There is, for example, the new material called aerated clay. It is a common clay filled during manufacture with gas bubbles so that its final consistency is much like that of a petrified sponge. This material comes in large slabs, weighs one-fifth as much as brick, can be sawed like wood, and can be glazed during manufacture so as to be absolutely waterproof. Still another material is a similarly aerated concrete. Whatever the material of the future wall may be, it will be made up into light, large, labor-saving, insulated units, totally unlike the tiny, heavy, slowly laid and almost non-insulating brick with which we now build less well than did the Romans and the Chaldeans.

Let us turn from walls to windows. The window surface will probably continue to increase, despite the fact that the dwelling quarters of today have at least 50 percent more glass area than those of a century ago. A house open to sunshine and fresh air is just as much a demand of the times as our present sport clothing. Under the antiquated methods of construction now pursued, a large window is a tremendous luxury because it leaks so much heat; but with the development and substitution of devices other than windows for ventilation, the bulk of the windows will be relieved of this function, and can therefore be made more secure and better insulated.

There need be no fear of any breakdowns in artificial air conditioning so long as the house remains capable of natural ventilation. In theatres, movie houses and lately in department stores, we have come to accept air conditioning as a matter of course, though in our houses and apartments we obtain coolness and ventilation by opening windows or turning on electric fans.

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In the house of the future it will certainly be possible to turn the heat on or off as we now turn on electric lights, so that rooms will be warm in a minute. At present our heating efforts largely vanish into our heavy and frigid walls. In a masonry house during the first six hours of firing, one-half of the heat is swallowed by the walls, leaving exactly half in the room. A thin insulated wall, on the contrary, is warm after ten minutes, and the heat output can then be cut to one-half.

In the future we will return again to that excellent heating system—already in use in Japan and Europe—of evenly heating the whole floor, or floor and walls, so that they themselves act as the radiator and the cumbersome fixtures are gone. At the new British Embassy in Washington, for example, the entire ceiling radiates heat downwards. This is said to have the advantage that persons sitting down get the whole benefit of the radiation, while people moving about are cooled by their contact with the air, for it is not the carrier of the heat.

Standardization of Units

We can hardly take the space to enumerate all the other inventions which are sure to come, but something ought to be said about the kitchen and bathroom, which are the indispensable engines of the house. These rooms have already been considerably standardized, but only recently have the scattered pieces of equipment such as refrigerators and kitchen cabinets been coördinated. In houses and apartments of the future, it is not too much to expect that the kitchen and bathroom will be one standard unit, installed in a house as a motor is installed in a car. The housewife who surveys her present kitchen can hardly boast that it meets any great diversity of requirements. A further standardization would actually increase the diversification, since the kitchen would be treated for the first time as a serious problem in efficiency. We now have kitchen cabinets which include a sink, refrigerator and stove, and it would not be difficult to combine, on the back of this unit, a lavatory, toilet and shower stall, separated from the kitchen by a modern efficiently insulated wall panel. On the side toward the living room there could be a modernized Franklin stove—a combined fireplace and Arcola heater—with provision for wood, coal or gas. Such a unit, made by a single company, would destroy at its source that impudent inefficiency called plumbing, and it would release for more productive work the dozen salesmen, on each project, of separate fancy bathroom fixtures and kitchen devices.

Mr. Buckminster Fuller, of course, has gone much farther in ideas of standardization. He proposes manufacturing the same house for New York and Timbuctoo, thus taking advantage of the savings of mass production. Briefly, his house is suspended on a mast, has its own self-contained "utilities" independent of city supplies, does everything down to automatically washing your clothes, and is set up by a service company in three days.

Mass Production of Houses

Excessive worry has been expended on what such standardization would do to "design." Yet how does the greater mass of a city's population live today if not in essentially standardized quarters, standardized on a miserable plane? The only difference in apartment houses is in the shape of their ornaments, each more tawdry than the next. Compare the banality of those barracks with the excellence in design of the standard Ford used by the same people!

Yet houses have more variable functions than automobiles; and it is likely that diverse assemblies of standard units will replace or at least precede the completely standard house. Hence the number of possible combinations, even with standardized units, will be immensely greater than it is at present, with stereotyped plans and with brick, stone and concrete only. There will be the several metals with different "natural" finishes or enamel colors; there will be the clay panels with a vast number of glazes; there will be glass and other transparent materials with countless possible variations of opaqueness, tint and surface. Rooms will not become smaller, but will increase in size. The scourge of tiny rooms is largely due to expensive construction. For example, if finished panel units such as aerated clay, costing possibly ten cents per square foot, replace the present brick walls at one dollar per foot, the cost of larger rooms cannot be prohibitive.

Future methods of production and marketing of course will vary, but for the sake of a clear contrast we will describe one possible method. The purchaser will go to a branch office of a general housing corporation and will there choose the particular combination of space-enclosing units of a house service that best suits his needs. His choice will be noted down in numbers, precisely as an architect today specifies by number a standardized window unit out of Sweet's Catalogues. The service branch of the company thereupon will send an excavating machine to the site. This will be followed by the company's trucks bearing the building units and finally by the service gang to erect them.

We shall leave the house of the future sketched conservatively in general terms, omitting many further steps in its inevitable development. At a glance the intelligent reader will realize that the factory-built house, or multiple-family dwelling, can be financed as cars and radios are, with an enormous expansion of credit, and an increased independence of the land. When housing finally follows our other industries out of its present handicraft, special-instance stage into an industrialized one, we shall have twice as good a house at half what it costs today.

Douglas Haskell.

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A Portrait of James Joyce

IT IS TEA TIME at the Joyces'. Mrs. Joyce gives us the best tea and the nicest cakes that are to be had in any house in Paris. The children are here, now a young man and a young woman: George, a singer, Lucia, charming and retiring. Mrs. Joyce, with her rich personality, her sincere and steadfast character, is an ideal companion for a man who has to do Joyce's work. She talks about Galway to me, and the old rain-soaked town comes before me as she talks about the square, the churches, the convent in which were passed many of her years. Some close friends, Irish, English, French, American, are here for tea. It is Joyce's birthday—his forty-seventh—the second of February.

This particular day is worth noting in Irish intellectual history. In the first place it is Saint Brighid's Day, the first day of spring, when, according to Irish-speaking people, the sun "takes a cock's step forward." Saint Brighid was the patron of poets. James Stephens' birthday is on the second of February; Thomas MacDonagh's also fell on the same date. The fact that James Stephens and he have the same birthday is of enormous interest to Joyce. I do not know that he has any belief in any system of astrology, but I know that he is very much influenced by correspondences which seem to disclose something significant in man's life. The whole of "Ulysses" is a vast system of correspondences. "Signatures of all things I am here to read," Stephen Daedalus muses as he walks along the strand, "seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot." The "signatures" are to be read, not only in the still life along the seashore, but in all sorts of occurrences. The fact that he and James Stephens have the same birthday, have the same first name, that they both have two children, a boy and a girl, and that the hero of "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" who is also a figure in "Ulysses" is named Stephen, is not only of great interest but of extreme importance in Joyce's mind.

James Joyce, because of the state of his eyes, reads very little nowadays, and so it is a surprise to find that the conversation has turned to literature. He speaks of Henry James, who he thinks has influenced Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past." He praises "Portrait of a Lady," dwelling with much delight on the presentation of Isabel Archer. He says that he has taken up "Madame Bovary" again recently, but found the narrative part tedious. For Yeats's poetry he has a high regard, and mentions that, in collaboration with an Italian poet, he did a translation into Italian of "The Countess Cathleen" (it will be remembered that it was the lyrics in this play that possessed the mind of young Stephen Daedalus at a sorrowful time of his life). And having spoken of Yeats he goes on to speak of some other Irish writers. George Moore gave him one of his recent books; Joyce was sorry that the book was not "Esther Waters," which he likes. I thought that as a Dublin man he would have a share in that city's veneration for Swift. He has nothing of it. "He made a mess of two women's lives," he says. I speak of the intensity that is in passages of Swift's writing. "There is more intensity," Joyce says, "in a single stanza of Mangan's than in all Swift's writing." Then I remember that the earliest prose of Joyce's which I read was an essay on Mangan; it had appeared in the college magazine while Joyce was a student. I am delighted to hear this European master praise a poet who is so little known outside Ireland. He does not think that the patriotic anthem "Dark Rosaleen" is Mangan at his best. He praises "Kathleen-ni-Holohan," "The Lament for Sir Maurice Fitzgerald," "Siberia," and two less known poems which are described as translations—the epigram that begins "Veil not thy mirror, sweet Amine," and a poem of exile that has for a beginning "Morn and eve a star invites me, One imploring silver star." He praises Goldsmith, too, especially the Goldsmith of "Retaliation," quoting with great delight the lines upon Burke:

> whose genius was such
> We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;
> Who born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.
> Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
> To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote.

He praises Goldsmith for his human qualities. "He was unassuming," he says. For Joyce thinks it is a virtue in a man to make no disturbance about what he does or the life he has to live. "What is so courteous and so patient as a great faith?" he asks in his youthful essay on Mangan, and perhaps it is because they are indications of this great faith that he praises modesty and courtesy in certain men.

In the evening I see James Joyce again: it is at a dinner which is a birthday celebration. His appearance, his manner, his hospitality, have a quality which is courtly. I am reminded of an old-fashioned grace that was in a few Dublin houses of the old days where gentlemanliness was evident in appearance and discourse. James Joyce's family is here and some close friends of the family. Miss Sylvia Beach, the American woman who published "Ulysses," and Sullivan, the Franco-Irish tenor who

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is singing at the Paris Opera. The waiter brings a special wine which Joyce recommends to us very earnestly though he does not drink it himself as it is red. It is Clos Saint Patrice, 1920, and it is from the part of France where Saint Patrick sojourned after he had made escape from his Irish captivity. Joyce will not have it that Patrick was from the Island of Britain—he was a Gaul. He notes how the Tannhäuser legend in its earliest form is attached to Saint Patrick. When he crossed the river and planted his staff, the staff flowered, and where it flowered are the vineyards of today. "He is the only saint whom a man can get drunk in honor of," Joyce says, praising Patrick in this way. We laugh, but he insists that this is high praise. He vaunts Patrick above all the other saints in the calendar. Some of us mention St. Francis, but Joyce is no Franciscan, and he dismisses the Poor Man. We think that he may have more sympathy with the intellectual saints, the great Doctors of the Church; he declares he takes little interest in Augustine. Aquinas, then, whose esthetic Stephen Daedalus in "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" accepts? But Joyce does not seem to have the veneration for Aquinas that he once had. I think he may put Ignatius Loyola high on account of the noble praise he has given to the Jesuit order in "Portrait of the Artist." But he does not praise Loyola—the only saint he will praise is Saint Patrick, and we are convinced by his argument as we drink the Clos Saint Patrice. And then we hear Joyce saying very earnestly, "he was modest and he was sincere," and this is praise indeed from Joyce, and he adds, alluding to Patrick's confession, "He waited too long to write his 'Portrait of the Artist as an Old Man.'"

This evening I have an instance of his genuine dismay at any suggestion that people whom he knows may be involved in anything violent. I had mentioned that after the kidnapping of a Russian general, the house I was living in had been watched by the police, for many Russians had apartments in it. I even had gone on to say that I thought the attic I had rented to do some work in was being searched for papers. Joyce was disturbed. Now he asks me about the affair, and I tell him that nothing is happening—there is no search going on now. Joyce is actually relieved to hear this. He has led the most heroic life of any writer living today; what he has accomplished could only have been done through the confrontation every day of obstacles which would have made another despair or turn back. And so when he speaks of his aversion to aggressiveness, turbulence, violence of any kind, his words are impressive. "Birth and death are sufficiently violent for me," he says. The state for which he has the highest esteem was the old Hapsburg Empire. "They called it a ramshackle empire," he says, "I wish there were more such ramshackle empires in the world." What he liked about old Austria was not only the mellowness of life there, but the fact that the state tried to impose so little upon its own or upon other people. It was not warlike, it was not efficient, and its bureaucracy was not strict; it was the country for a peaceful man. Crime does not fascinate James Joyce as it fascinates the rest of us—the suggestion of crime dismays him. He tells me that one of his handicaps in writing "Work in Progress" is that he has no interest in crime of any kind, and he feels that this book which deals with the night-life of humanity should have reference to that which is associated with the night-life of cities—crime. But he cannot get criminal action into the work. With his dislike of violence goes another dislike—the dislike of any sentimental relation. Violence in the physical life, sentimentality in the emotional life, are to him equally distressing. The sentimental part of Swift's life repels him as much as the violence of some of his writing.

For Sullivan he shows the most brotherly regard. It seems to me that he sees in this tenor the singer he might have been. They are men of the same age, each has won European recognition in the country where recognition in their particular art is hardest to obtain and most worth while—Joyce in France with his writing, Sullivan in Italy with his singing. Joyce might have had his appearance in opera or on the concert platform. When he was a student in the university and sang at one of the Feis Ceoil competitions, he was awarded a silver medal; the director of the Academy of Music sent for him and offered him free training. Later on when he was in Trieste and had the manuscripts of "Dubliners" and "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" coming back to him, he had the temptation to forsake literature and make his career that of a singer. What wasted life these ten years in Trieste were, teaching languages, receiving no encouragement as a writer, no acknowledgment! I know by the way he speaks about those days that the temptation to turn to another career must have been a bitter one.

In Paris he goes to the Opera; he goes every night on which Sullivan has a leading role. He thinks Sullivan is phenomenal in "William Tell." "There are eight hundred top notes in it, including seventy of the highest register between B flat and C sharp." It is characteristic of Joyce that he should have made this estimate. He ranks Rossini with the very great composers and puts "William Tell" with the greatest of the operas. He discerns in it the theme which he himself has worked out in "Ulysses"—the father's search for the son, the son's search for the father. Ostensibly the opera is about the relation of men to their fatherland; into it comes the old patriot's relation to his son Arnold, and Arnold's love for Mathilde, whose father is the oppressor of the fatherland, and the fugitive who is pursued by the imperial forces because he has protected his daughter from their molestation. All this Joyce makes clear to us as we sit with him at this pleasant celebration.

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We drink more of the Clos Saint Patrice. What of Joyce's relation to the country to which Patrick returned after his sojourn in France? He does not speak of it. And yet he says that he should like to live in a city that was not one of the great cities of the earth—one that has a population of about 300,000. "I go to forge a new conscience for my race," Stephen Daedalus said as he left the city that has about that population. We have no speeches on this birthday: no one tells James Joyce (although a few of his fellow countrymen are present) that the creator of Stephen Daedalus has not failed in the labor of creating that new conscience. We know that he has not failed although we keep silence about it.

In the apartment to which we return there is jollity. George Joyce sings; Sullivan sings; James Joyce sings. He is persuaded to sing a humorous Irish ballad, "Mollie Branagan," and he renders it with gusto; the phrasing, the intonation, are as an old ballad singer would have them. And then he sings a tragic and sorrowful country song which I have never come across in any collection nor heard from any one else except James Joyce. It is about a man who has given his life to a stranger—he may be from Fairyland, he may be Death himself. It has for burthen "O love of my heart" and "O the brown and the yellow ale," and these refrains in Joyce's voice have more loss in them than ever I heard expressed. He had said to me when we were at the Opera together, "A voice is like a woman—you respond or you do not; its appeal is direct," and he said this to show that what was sung transcended in appeal everything that was written. His own voice in the humorous and the sorrowful song was unforgettable.

And now we sit at the table, two of us, and drink out of the great flagon of white wine that is there, and talk about Dublin days and scenes and people. All memories are sorrowful, and Joyce, who remembers more than any other man, has much to be sorrowful about. He faces suffering in operations on his eyes—ten already. But his thought is never personal; he thinks of friends, he plans how to serve them. Some words are said about writing. "What goes on in an ordinary house like this house in an ordinary day or night—that is what should be written about," he says. "Getting up, dressing, saying ordinary words, doing ordinary business, eating, sleeping, all that we take for granted, not leaving out the digestive processes." For writers who are prophetic Joyce has little regard. "It would be a great impertinence for me to think that I could tell the world what to believe or how to behave." I think of a passage in this early essay of his on Mangan, a passage that is significant because Joyce's mind has not changed in the time between youth and prime. "It must be asked concerning every artist how he is in relation to the highest knowledge and to those laws which do not take holiday because men and times forget them. This is not to look for a message but to approach the temper which has made the work, an old woman praying, or a young man fastening his shoe, and to see what is there well done and how much it signifies." He thinks that too much fuss has been made about the work of recent Irish writers. "If we lift up the back-skirts of English literature we will find there everything we have been trying to do." Every shade of meaning that any writer might want to find can be found in the English language, he says. I feel that only a man who is sustained by some great faith can speak as simply as he speaks. "In those vast courses which enfold us and in that great memory which is greater and more generous than our memory, no life, no moment of exaltation is ever lost; and all those who have written nobly have not written in vain, though the desperate and weary have never heard the silver laughter of wisdom." So he wrote in this youthful essay which I have quoted from before, and perhaps these words hold his faith.

PADRAIC COLUM.

A Dirge for College Liberalism

William Harlan Hale, the author of this article, is about to graduate from Yale. His articles in The Harkness Hoot, which he founded with Selden Rodman, have helped to make it, during the past year, the liveliest of college magazines.—THE EDITORS.

WHATEVER connotations of radicalism and insurgency may have accompanied the phrase "younger generation" ten years ago, they no longer exist or no longer apply. The undergraduate world at college now is not a younger generation as we customarily think of that term. The college man of ten years ago, who is now in business or doing professional or literary work, possesses far more young and radical sentiment than does the Yale or Harvard senior of the current year. Carried on the wave of post-war revolt in thought and morals, the students of the early twenties were the last word in radicalism and smart progressiveness. Today a complete revolt has set in, and to be an Eastern college man is to be a collared conservative.

The first thing to disappear was the interest in politics. One hears so much about the lively and often violent political enthusiasms of students in Germany, France, Italy, South America, that one is prone to regard the trait as universal. But the

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average student in American colleges—and especially in the fashionable Eastern ones—scorns politics and all public questions as beneath him. The Republican and Democratic rallies attempted during the last presidential campaign at Yale were both dismal fiascos; and when the well beloved Dean of the Yale Graduate School was elected Governor last fall in a picturesque contest, not a student eye was lifted.

College interest in politics would mean liberal interest. It would mean the expression of young and untrained opinion as a foil to the dogma of vested interest. It would mean a search for leaders, not for machines. The utter lack of any influential political thought in the universities testifies to an amazing unconcern with all conditions of the present and problems of the future. True, a few liberal clubs struggle along as minor student organizations, but their efforts to present radical speakers like Norman Thomas, Arthur Garfield Hays, or even the mildly enticing Judge Lindsey, are rewarded with pathetic indifference. (The furor aroused in the University of Pittsburgh by its Liberal Club over the interdiction of Harry Elmer Barnes's projected address, is an exception.) Debating societies in large Eastern colleges have practically ceased to exist. Political and social agitation is frowned upon by the undergraduate leaders, and consequently relegated to the obscurity of almost clandestine off-campus coteries.

One might explain this dearth of interest in politics and state affairs as being only part of a nation-wide decline of public enthusiasm and the growing disgust with American legislators and their cloacal methods. But the death of college liberalism expresses itself through other channels.

There is the trivial, but amusing and symbolic, matter of clothing. Everyone remembers, perhaps with a certain sense of pain, the baggy trousers, the collegiate semi-bohemianism, the tumble-down Fords, the gin-and-necking-party tradition of several years ago. That order is now renounced in all but certain tidewater and Midwestern institutions. The change is a welcome relief to both spectators and participants. But at the Big Three, the newer note is one of utmost conservatism in dress and public deportment. The Yale or Princeton student who wishes to make a mark dresses like a young banker on the Exchange—smartly, expensively, unostentatiously. He jumps into black suits and stiff collars on the slightest provocation.

At the great university, one behaves like a gentleman. One tries to imagine the campus as a sort of country club, where one's every move is being observed by the brokers who are one's future partners. One carries on the great tradition of the upper class. Such experiments as the attempt last year of several Dartmouth innovators to substitute shorts for trousers, are not given the dignity of a moment's notice. Something awkwardly self-conscious and unbending pervades the social air as well as the sartorial system. There prevails a constant fear of doing what is not in line with the dictates of Park Avenue hostesses and their golfing consorts. A certain staleness, a brackish odor, hovers over blossoming manhood.

In his publications, through which he expresses himself most directly, the Eastern undergraduate reaches the summit of his acquiescence. The only large college paper that has taken a progressive stand in recent years is The Harvard Crimson. By some miracle it has been blessed with a number of wide-awake editors who understood the literary possibilities of their occupation. The Yale News, since its liberal action against compulsory chapel six years ago, has sunk into almost total agreement with the authorities on every major point. Nor has any alert editorial voice been heard in The Daily Princetonian. Especially in the latter two there has been a consistent overemphasis on athletic news and a playing-down of controversial topics. The ultra-conservative force of fraternities and secret societies, in which the editors are always involved, as well as the traditional *mortmain* of the alumni, have prevented them from any interest in a chance burst of radicalism. It is a condition normal, perhaps, in America; but it is a suspicious symptom in twenty-year-olds.

Obviously in sympathy with the faculty, The Daily Princetonian this fall tried as well as it could to crush the life out of The Argo, a progressive literary magazine started by two undergraduates in opposition to the dainty and antiquated Nassau Lit. At Yale the editorial voice of the daily paper repeatedly attacked The Harkness Hoot, a literary periodical founded with the object of reawakening student interest in writing and discussion. The Yale Record, an elegant witty journal whose board is decorated by at least one of those delicate young gentlemen who make a point of despising culture, tried to smother The Hoot under a storm of reactionary malice. At Harvard no progressive magazine has appeared since the now rather flopping Hound and Horn (which was started by a group of undergraduates); but when one does, it will have to buck the same currents of vested opposition.

Educators at Yale and Harvard suggest that the House Plan will put an end to undergraduate apathy and lack of community of interest. But the grouping of men in units of several hundred instead of in units of several thousand will not necessarily revive any interest in politics or liberal experiment. The motionless conservatism and uncurious acquiescence typified by the college papers will remain whether sleeping quarters are reorganized or not. What will happen, as a matter of fact, is that as the social groups draw closer, the controlling hand of the leaders will become more powerful. These leaders are always chosen for their approach to the conventional ideal—they dare not associate with the things that "aren't done." This restraining force, this fear of innovation or any sort of insurgency, will be made all but intolerable in many of the small

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social groups that will evolve through the House Plan.

Observers may regard this collapse of the liberal point of view in the universities as melancholy and the prospects of a continuing inertia as wholly lamentable. One is at a loss to suggest a remedy. In default of undergraduate leaders or independent curiosity, it should be the duty of the university heads themselves to introduce provocative and controversial lecturers. Of course, the capitalistic trustees and corporations which dominate the scene are averse to any such dangerous experimentation; they see frightful visions of a graduating class of insane Communists.

But a courageous university could do much to change the conservative obsession of its students by including a hot-head or two among its major teachers. The chief idols now are such amiable and thoroughly Tennysonian individuals as William Lyon Phelps or such cloistered scolds as Irving Babbitt. Surely there is little food here for the future thinkers of a nation. Certainly there is no opportunity for the development of young leaders who *are* leaders, not merely football heroes. A big man or two on the staff to brace the waning student vitality would be a healthy move, but one requiring courage—a quality not common to most faculties.

Is this suspended state of college liberalism a sign of a new tendency in American society? One wonders. Can one fit it in with the delicate and conservative classicism of many young writers, or perhaps with the somewhat Victorian fashions now dominant in women's attire, or with a dozen hints one hears of a return to form and formality, to decency and old-fashioned aristocracy? One wonders. They will run into trouble, these young classes of bankers. They will become more and more isolated from the new world and its movements. And as for leaders, they will produce no improvement over Coolidge and Hoover.

Perhaps, indeed, their hands are not fated to hold the destiny of the future. Possibly the center of power will have moved away from them, and the real leaders will come from a far different sector of society. WILLIAM HARLAN HALE.

Chain Stores: Menace or Promise?

V: *Why the Chain Store Wins*

AN IMPORTANT development in food distribution during the last twenty years has been the gradual growth in the production of packaged goods. This in turn has led to another development of no less importance—the distribution of food products on a national scale. The method used for this purpose is national advertising. These nationally sold packaged goods have therefore come to be known as national brands. However, for every manufacturer of a nationally known packaged product there are many smaller concerns who manufacture the same article and put it up in what are called private brands.

The private brand is not necessarily the product of a small local manufacturer, for it often comes from a manufacturer who operates on a large scale and distributes nationally. R. H. Macy, for example, sells packaged goods at retail bearing the Macy label. These goods are not manufactured by Macy's but by some manufacturer whose identity is not revealed on the package. Smaller retailers may handle such private brands bearing the label of the wholesale grocers from whom they buy. The wholesaler owns the label and the manufacturer who puts up the goods has no interest in it.

In the present state of the food-distribution industry it is these private labels, owned by the wholesaler or retailer, which have come to have an important bearing on the fight between chains and independents. For many years goods passed from producer to the final consumer by a route whose progressive steps are almost sanctified by a kind of tradition. The manufacturer sold to the wholesaler, the wholesaler to the retailer and the retailer sold to the consumer. If a wholesaler refused to handle or push vigorously the manufacturer's product, there was little the latter could do about it. However, when national brands entered the field, this traditional process of distribution was seriously disturbed. The manufacturer's advertising was addressed directly to the consumer. An effective advertising campaign compelled the retailer to buy the advertised goods and compelled the wholesaler to handle them. Once the demands of the consumer forced them to handle these goods, the whole situation was reversed. The retailer and the wholesaler were at the mercy of the manufacturer. He could dictate prices and terms as long as he could keep the consumer demand alive with advertising.

One of the first results of this new method was that the wholesaler, resenting his new position, began pushing the brands of smaller local manufacturers. He began using his own labels on these products and in many cases would use the labels of the retail stores. In 1914, for example, the following appeal was addressed to retailers:

> Cut out advertised lines. Be your own boss. Be independent. Buy good merchandise with a reliable manufacturer with whom you can tie up. Put your

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> own labels on the merchandise. Advertise it. Advertise your store and yourself. Capitalize yourself and your local reputation and teach your customers to rely upon your responsibility and the value of your buying advice. That's the way to become successful.

As a matter of fact, this private-label campaign did not get very far, and soon the national brands were bowling along to an extraordinary success. Then another factor entered the field—the modern chain store. Chains like the A. and P., it is true, had been in existence for some time, but they were little more than groups of stores, only beginning to develop those principles of modern merchandising which are now their characteristic features. As the chains became larger, they began to deal directly with the manufacturer and to demand the wholesale price. Here was another blow at this traditional distribution of goods. The wholesalers attacked the manufacturers for selling to the chains at wholesale prices, and in many cases were strong enough to frighten them away from that policy. In the West, the Kroger chain had so much difficulty that it was forced to establish its own bakeries and canning factories. The A. and P. had a bitter fight with the Cream of Wheat Company, which refused to sell its product to the A. and P. because that organization sold it for less than the advertised price. In the end the A. and P. set up a factory and manufactured its own brand of cream of wheat—Grandmother's wheat farina.

After a while the chains grew to such power that they became the dominant food distributors in certain territories. To have refused to sell to them would have been ruinous to most manufacturers. Hence the manufacturers, disregarding the warnings and threats of the wholesalers, began to sell to the chains. Now the chains are the largest individual buyers of national brands.

Certain independents have revived the policy of pushing private brands. The interested party in this new private-brand development is the wholesaler. He has obviously lost that enormous area of food distribution taken over by the chain. But his loss has been greater than this because the competition of the chains has driven the more intelligent independent grocer, who constituted the better part of the wholesaler's clientele, to seek some means of meeting the low-price policy of the chains. Out of this necessity grew the voluntary chains. The independent-grocery-store field is now rapidly dividing itself into two groups: one, organized independents served by wholesalers who are merely buying agents and, second, unorganized independents served by the old-style wholesalers. In order to meet the present competition of the chains, both types of wholesalers have been turning more and more to private brands.

The complaint is made that the national-brand manufacturer does not allow a sufficient profit on his goods to enable the retailer to handle them. The private brands are generally sold to the retailer at a lower price so that in turn he can sell them at a lower price to the consumer. This is altogether in the interest of the consumer, provided, of course, that the goods do not suffer in quality or quantity. The promoters of private brands argue that the high cost to the dealer of the national brands is the result of the expensive advertising campaigns used to exploit them. It has cost countless millions of dollars to drill the trade names of national brands into the national consciousness. Even before the War it was alleged that the name Uneeda Biscuit was worth a million dollars a letter, and James B. Duke, the late tobacco king, told the United States Commissioner of Corporations that those two magic words—Bull Durham—were worth about ten million dollars apiece.

There is no doubt that the cost of advertising does affect the price of many products. It is not that advertising costs are too high for mass production to absorb, but advertising can be used to pump fictitious values into goods—it can create so powerful a desire for them that they can be sold at a higher price even though the cost of production is small. Though this is true of much advertising, it is not of course true of all advertised products. It is certainly less true in the field of food products as a whole than in the drug, clothing, furniture and novelty fields.

At all events, the old type of production is challenging the modern one of nationally advertised goods. The contest will be worth watching and studying. The independent grocery stores now have an opportunity to test the methods of large-scale buying and mass production, which benefit the public by producing foods at minimum costs and by distributing them without any extrinsic values based on name and label.

However, it must be pointed out here that private brands tend to lack the one advantage which most critics are willing to concede to advertised goods. High quality in food is a matter of supreme importance. Though there are laws to maintain this high quality, they are only moderately effective and can never be anything more unless they are reinforced by the manufacturer's interest in protecting the quality of his goods. As long as the manufacturer puts his own name and label on his goods, he must stand behind them. His own name and fame are associated with their quality. The element of pride and self-respect is not to be discounted as a guarantee behind foods when supplemented by a law which compels the manufacturer to receive publicly the odium and loss involved in an attack upon or criticism of his goods. However, when a manufacturer, remaining anonymous in the background, turns out his product for several hundred or even a thousand small dealers, all of whom use their own particular label on the package, the whole advantage of responsibility is naturally lost. The customer who buys, let us say, Smith's beans, which

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are sold everywhere under that name, and finds them unsatisfactory, will refuse to buy them again either in the store where he first obtained them or anywhere else. But if he finds Robinson's beans unsatisfactory, Robinson being a local wholesale grocer who doesn't make the beans and who merely owns the label, he may switch to Jones's beans without ever knowing that they are both made by the same manufacturer and differ only in name. A Federal Trade Commission complaint against beans with Robinson's name on them will fail to include Jones and several hundred other dealers whose beans, having been baked in the same factory, should therefore have been subject to the same complaint. For these reasons it is to be regretted that the independents have resorted to the use of private brands in the merchandising of their products.

Of course the chains use their own private brands, too, but they manufacture their own products for the most part and, being large firms, have the same interest in maintaining a high standard as do the national advertisers. This does not apply to those smaller chains which purchase and use private brands in precisely the same way as the independents.

In any case, it is the chains that are now carrying full lines of national brands and the independents that are abandoning them. Dr. Palmer, in the list of items selected by him in Chicago, found sixty-four national brands out of seventy-five carried in every chain store studied, whereas a full line of national brands was not carried in a single independent store. Some of the well known brands were not found in one store out of eight. I found the same situation in the stores which I visited myself. Some, in fact, carried hardly a single national brand I asked for.

I have mentioned the fact that private brands are used extensively among the voluntary chains. Before concluding this article I must explain this tendency further.

The chief difference between the chain grocery stores and the independents is in buying and management. The buying advantages of the chains rest on their large-scale operations. An organization which goes into the market and buys two hundred million pounds of sugar and two hundred million cakes of soap will certainly buy cheaper than one which goes into the market to buy one hundred pounds of sugar and twelve dozen cakes of soap.

But this is not the only advantage. After these articles have been bought they have to be sold, and here the factor of management becomes a major difference between the chains and most of the independents. If there is shrewd management at the central office of the chain, the chain can spread out and control all its stores. Skillful management costs money, but the chain can afford this expense because it can apportion the cost among a large number of units. As I have already pointed out, a few independents have capable managers, but this helps only their individual stores. However, lack of managerial skill in an independent grocer does not necessarily mean that he is a fool. For after all, merchandising has developed into a highly complicated business and there are few men who possess the triple gifts of wise buying, wise selling and wise administration.

The thoughtful independent merchant has discovered this. He knows that his buying power cannot compete with the buying power of the chain, but he has also found that by combining his buying power with that of a number of other independents, the buying power of all will be sufficiently large to enable them to enter the market upon more equal terms with the chains.

They have also discovered that administrative skill can be purchased when a sufficient number of merchants unite in the venture. There seems to be no reason why an independent storekeeper, like the chains, cannot employ all the technique of modern merchandising—displays, selection of goods, quick turnover, cost accounting, etc.—for he need only hire someone to show him how. A realization of these simple, obvious and fundamental facts has led to the latest development in the retail-grocery field. This is the organization of what might be called voluntary chains—chains in which the buying is done by a central agency and in which the selling is done in unit retail stores operating under the administration of a central selling expert, but owned by the merchant who manages the unit.

These voluntary chains are of various kinds, with varying degrees of coöperation. There are groups in which the wholesaler merely acts as buyer under a contract, turning the goods over to the retailer at cost, plus cost of handling. There are groups which the wholesaler controls and in which he surrounds himself with retailers whom he serves, while other groups are controlled by retailers for whom the wholesaler acts as a kind of employed agent. There are others which are jointly controlled by wholesalers and retailers. Some are local, others regional and national in scope, including wholesalers and retailers by the thousands. There are some groups in which the wholesaler, besides doing the purchasing, supplies an extensive sales advisory service. He prepares advertising, furnishes specials, makes suggestions for displays, accounting and selection of commodities. Some of these groups operate under the names of individual owners without disclosing their central-chain hook-up. Others operate under a common name, using store fronts, furnishings, etc., common to all the stores, differing from the corporate chains merely in the unit ownership of the stores.

The Nation Wide Stores, which have wholesaler supervision, embrace eighteen wholesalers and twenty-five hundred retailers. The Independent Grocers' Alliance—the I. G. M.—is the largest of these groups. It is a national organization which comprises fifty-eight wholesalers and nine thousand retail outlets. The Red and White Stores, central-

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ized in Buffalo, have 4,500 stores in the United States and 1,500 in Canada. They exercise a close control over retailing operations and specialize in their own labels. There are a large number of others. In cities like Minneapolis and St. Paul, where there are 500 chain-store units, there are 600 stores in these voluntary chains, and it is said that there are not a hundred high-class grocery stores outside of these groups.

The development of the grocery business, therefore, seems to be marked by the continuing growth of the corporate chains on one hand and on the other the growth of the voluntary chains which will include most of the intelligent independents. When this movement has gone farther, most of the forward-looking grocery wholesalers will have established themselves at the center of these voluntary chains. The other wholesalers, abandoned to the trade of the small retailers, will doubtless fall upon such difficult days that they will be driven out of business. And the chain store, in one form or another, will be supreme. It will have won its supremacy, in the main, by more efficient practices. What control of it may then be required in the public interest will not concern itself chiefly with protecting the independent, but with protecting the consumer.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

In Defense of the American Standard

I AM IN FAVOR of the American Standard of Living, though there was a time in the not distant past when I looked upon it with an almost passionate lack of sympathy. It irked me to be invited to view its victims against a background of its most authentic manifestations. While the Orthodox worshiped it in the abstract, before a tabernacle built up of American Enterprise, Republican Dependability, High Tariffs and Immigration Control, I cultivated a spirit more real and rare.

Now I begin to see I was mistaken. For one thing, my distaste for the American Standard prevented my discovering that I was in some degree one of its victims. For another, only by keeping the great middle class following the American Standard as a grail can those who lurk beyond it be assured of a steady volume of quality goods at low prices. Unless the American Standard bearers carry the overhead, the bushwhackers will fail to receive the net.

Start with lodging. Uttering an American Standard prayer, the great middle class counts its raises in advance and crowds endlessly toward new apartments and neat cottages in garden suburbs. These are communities which have been built, from the pasture up, for the salt of the earth. White boulders and red posies edge the drive at the station. The apartment houses are screened with Christmas trees. The cottages are hedged. Within are chambers rendered airproof with beaver board, and trimmed rather closely fore and aft, so as to leave room for the advertising appropriation. Loud speakers make the apartment courts reverberating wells of sound. Taxes and the elements have at the cottages eternally. With Spartan sternness the middle class hooks in, hangs on, embracing the fate assigned it by the oracles of the enameled magazines.

Thus the pressure of white-collar competition for a place to live is removed from old-fashioned, quiet streets in the city. On one of these one rents an airily high and wide upper floor, with southern exposure, in a brownstone fortress. The price is half of what one would pay in a garden suburb for a box abutting on Pandemonium concentrate. One's windows on the south overlook a vast backyard. One has sun, winter or summer, from dawn to dark. One's rooms are replete with a prodigality of woodwork, built-in mirrors and cupboards. On the farther side of the block one observes other such houses topped with an inordinate clutter of chimney pots, solidly shutting out street noises, maintaining in the central expanse a continuous comparative calm. One feels reassured. Here, thanks to the American Standard, one can work and live in peace.

Perhaps one needs furniture. If, as sometimes happens, one has come to the new lodgings with more time and less money than the American Standard implies, one may trust in the magic of that Standard here also. By its attractive powers it will leave one free to purchase of the best, in haunts where the foot of the Standard bearer seldom if ever treads.

Prodded unceasingly by the sales stimuli of great furniture producers, the middle class valiantly strains to buy a new suite today and discard it for a newer one tomorrow. On this basis, naturally, what it gets is gumwood. Except in oak or maple, one must go rather above the average middle-class price limit to find new furniture with legs or stretchers of anything more characterful than American gum. Included in the price of gumwood furniture are an assessment to cover the oversized overhead and waste of the business and, of course, the necessary tax to provide for consistent excitation in the better magazines. For the remainder of one's expenditure, one receives goods which depreciate with a swiftness hardly short of mystic, and which necessarily must succumb at a maximum rate to senility or obsolescence, thus to make room for more.

While Sisyphus the Standard bearer sweats to sustain a bull movement on Grand Rapids, Dedalus the skulker explores in sleepier marts, buying, for little money, furniture more soundly composed, styled and built than striving Sisyphus will ever own. It is "used" furniture, that is true. More to the point, however, it is furniture designed and built for years of use without regard to the assaults of infirmity or the passing mode. It is solidly mahogany or walnut; its lines are graceful; its form bal-

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anced. It is, in sum, furniture immune to obsolescence, built to last. From the upper economic level it has passed direct to the lower. It is always beyond the reach of the Standard bearers on the level between: first, because its original cost is too high, then because it is "second hand," and finally, because it is "antique"—costly stuff about which one reads. As one of the beneficiaries of the low-cost second stage, one can hardly do otherwise than cheer to the echo the Standard under which the middle-class tabu against "used" furniture holds so firm a place.

With equal effectiveness the American Standard operates in the field of lesser furnishings, of groceries—particularly fruits—of drugs and sundries, of haberdashery and of hardware.

Special prices draw the salt of the earth to those cathedrals of the American Standard, the great department stores. Sub-Standard folk, prowling on shabby streets, uncover here and there the excess stocks of importers and purchase for thirty or forty cents certain items "specially priced" at from one to three dollars uptown. Or they find their way to markets in the vicinity of receiving docks and buy freshly unloaded oranges and grapefruit at half the price featured in the "household advice" columns of the American Standard press.

Surely, were not the bulk of these products purchased by the Standard bearers, at Standard-bearing prices, the lower orders never would have opportunity to procure them in sufficient amount or at a rate within their reach.

Off the chosen path of American Standard traffic, one also comes upon stocks of all the current remedies and toiletries, offered in any quantity at far less than one would pay at a "cut-rate" store of Standard type. Such stocks evidently represent the overflow from the great production machines developed to flood the American Standard market. Because it is better to produce goods at scant profit than to permit machines to lie as frozen assets, while overhead accumulates, outlets are multiplied in the low-rent districts. Here they do not compete with stores selling at American Standard prices; and they serve as sources of supply for those stores, while profiting as well from the sub-Standard trade.

In similarly shabby locations one finds haberdashery and hardware offered at half-price or less. At first one is tempted to regard these wares as shoddy and inferior, but closer inspection reveals brands well established in the American Standard mind. The devotees of the American Standard have called these goods into existence in quantities too great for the American Standard trade to absorb. But such is the sway of the American Standard that, while sub-Standard persons here economically purchase what suits their need, the Standard-bearing faithful continue uncompromisingly to buy identical goods at Standard prices in stores only a few blocks away.

It is plain to me that a morale which maintains these conditions, and a Standard which enforces that morale, cannot be encouraged too much. That is why I have deserted my former attitude of antipathy to become a whooping partisan on the side lines. As far as active participation in the great struggle is concerned, I shall continue to restrain myself. But from this moment, any aspirant to a fuller realization of the American Standard of Living, so long as he is trying hard, may consider me as cheering him on.

MURRAY GODWIN.

The Last Days of Alice

Alice grown lazy, mammoth but not fat,
Declines upon her lost and twilit age,
Above in the dozing leaves the grinning cat
Quivers forever with his abstract rage;

Whatever light swayed on the perilous gate
Forever sways, nor will the arching grass
Caught when the world clattered undulate
In the deep suspension of the looking-glass.

Bright Alice! always pondering to gloze
The spoiled cruelty she had meant to say
Gazes learnedly down her airy nose
At nothing, nothing thinking all the day:

Turned absent-minded by infinity
She cannot move unless her double move,
The All-Alice of the world's entity
Smashed in the anger of her hopeless love.

Love for herself who as an earthly twain
Pouted to join her two in a sweet one:
No more the second lips to kiss in vain
The first she broke, plunged in the glass alone—

Alone to the weight of impassivity
Incest of spirit, theorem of desire
Without will as chalky cliffs by the sea
Empty as the bodiless flesh of fire;

All space that heaven is a dayless night
A nightless day driven by perfect lust
For vacancy, in which her frail eyesight
Stares at the drowsy cubes of human dust.

We, too, back to the world shall never pass
Through the splintered door, a dumb shade-harried crowd,
Being all infinite, function, depth and mass
Without figure; a mathematical shroud

Hurled at the air; blessèd without sin:
O god of our flesh, return to us your wrath
Let us be evil could we enter in
Your grace, and falter on the stony path!

ALLEN TATE.

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Washington Notes

Straws in the Wind—Renomination by Acclamation
Bolting Hoover—Democratic Chances
Decision of Curtis

A NUMBER of political straws have been blowing about in the wind recently, but to observers in this sector they do not seem particularly significant. On the Republican side, utterances from two well known wheel horses of the organization serve only to confirm the generally accepted belief that the renomination of Mr. Hoover is foreordained and "in the bag." One of these came from that interesting and experienced laborer in the Republican political vineyards of the South, Mr. C. Bascom Slemp. It was Mr. Slemp, it will be recalled, who, appointed by the good Calvin as private secretary, rounded up the Southern delegates for the administration in the 1924 convention. It always seemed to those who knew the value of his services along these lines that there was a lack of appreciation of Slemp in Mr. Coolidge's circle. However, though he resigned his White House place, his loyalty to Coolidge remained undiluted and he was one of those who, along with Fess, Butler, Hilles and a few others, stuck to the "draft Coolidge" idea pretty nearly to the finish.

So far as I know, Mr. Slemp has had no close personal or political White House relations since the Hoover administration started. Nevertheless, he is lined up completely with it now, and just before sailing for Paris the other day publicly expressed the view that Hoover would be renominated by "acclamation." Closely following on the heels of this came a pronouncement from the acrimonious but astute Mr. Moses, Senator from New Hampshire. I would not class Mr. Moses as a Hoover Republican, in spite of the fact that in 1928 he was the first man in the Senate and one of the first in the country to declare for him. This declaration, however, was never so far as I know ascribed to a special desire upon the part of Mr. Moses to have Mr. Hoover nominated. Rather it was attributed to the soundness of his political judgment and the clarity of his political foresight. A few days ago Senator Moses came here and after visiting the White House, Republican headquarters, the Senate office building and various other points of interest, went a step farther than Bascom. He told the correspondents that the "Chief" would not only be renominated in 1932, but reëlected.

However, that "acclamation" idea of Mr. Slemp is one in which nobody I know here takes the least stock. How silly to talk about renominating Hoover by "acclamation" in a convention where Bob La Follette will head the Wisconsin delegation and George Norris the Nebraska delegation! Mr. Coolidge was not nominated by acclamation at Cleveland in 1924, nor was Mr. Hoover at Kansas City in 1928, nor will he be renominated by acclamation at San Francisco, which city, I am informed, has already been chosen for 1932. On the contrary, I shall be greatly surprised if there are not from 125 to 150 votes cast against Hoover to the bitter end. Certainly there will be a wild, though unavailing, protest against his nomination.

The votes will be in hand to put him over. The Moseses, the Slemps, the Browns, the Smoots, Binghams, Fesses and Watsons will see to it that the old steam roller is in running order. But this idea of harmony in the convention is one of the most foolish I have yet heard. The fight against Hoover will be bitter and unrelenting from the start. It will come from two sources—from the progressives, who feel that he is reactionary in the extreme, that he is weak, vacillating and without courage or capacity. The other fight will come from the Wets, who believe he has subordinated his real convictions on prohibition to political expediency and are determined to punish him if they can.

It is quite obvious that even if these two anti-Hoover elements are combined in the convention, they will not be able to prevent his nomination, but they will be able to kick up a racket that will ring through the country and make better Democratic material in the campaign than any that will come later. Acclamation, my Aunt Biddy! Wait till you see the fight the hundred-odd hot delegates make out there against the thousand-odd. Unless there is a weakening of minds, hearts, bodies and souls of a most unprecedented nature, it will be a historic battle. Hoover will get his nomination all right, but not without a hammering such as he has not received before.

Moreover, unless all signs fail, the opposition in the convention will carry over into the campaign and last through the election. Regardless of whom the Democrats nominate, I am convinced there will be more Republican bolters from the Hoover ticket next time than ever before, the simple reason being that there are sounder excuses for bolting. This is so clear that except for two things I would now consider the chances of Hoover's defeat much better than even. One of these things, of course, is the return of a degree of prosperity that will inculcate in the people generally a fear of changing parties just after we have emerged from the depression and things are on the upgrade. A return of prosperity, if it occurs during the next year, might produce a popular psychology that would reëlect Hoover despite the general dissatisfaction with him.

The other thing which keeps me from overwhelming confidence in a Democratic success is the talent of Democrats for spoiling their own prospects. Undoubtedly there is a powerful element of the party hard at work in a subterranean but none the less enthusiastic way to control the party in the interests of the big-business group, and nominate a candidate who will appeal primarily to Wall Street. If they succeed, a considerable part of that Hoover bolt will be nullified and there may be a Democratic bolt in the South that will wipe out most of Hoover's liabilities. Either of these things—or both of them—may happen, and their possibility lends uncertainty to the future. Were it not for them, there would be no doubt of the result. I think almost anyone will agree that if the election were held this fall, almost any Democrat would beat Mr. Hoover. If economic conditions improve, it will take a real one to do it.

It is interesting that neither Mr. Slemp and Senator Moses, nor any others on their side, have said anything about Mr. Curtis' renomination in speaking of Hoover's. Some weeks ago I mentioned the personal political problem weighing on Charley's Kansas mind. I have not written here, nor I think has it been printed elsewhere, that Mr. Hoover, either directly or through an authorized agent, a few days

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ago assured Mr. Curtis of his desire to have him run again with him in 1932. However, he asked the Vice President to decide what he intended to do, so that the administration could plan its campaign. In other words, notice has been served on Charley that he can have the vice-presidential nomination again if he wants it, but he will not be permitted to wait until next April before announcing his decision. Unless prodded, that is exactly what Charley would do, too. As it is, my informants believe that Charley again will take his chances with the "Chief." He probably would anyhow, but he would prefer not to decide about it now.

Washington. T. R. B.

"Oedipus Rex," Cocteau and Stravinsky

MR. STOKOWSKI, Madame Matzenauer, Mr. Paul Althouse, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Harvard University Glee Club, Mr. Robert Edmond Jones and the other heroes of the American stage premiere of the "Oedipus Rex" of Cocteau and Stravinsky merely intensified all previous impressions of the fundamental dislocation of the extraordinary little oratorio-opera; and in the very course of a presentation establishing the high beauties of the score. More unquestionably than either the production of the work as an oratorio under Koussevitzky in Boston and New York, and as an opera under Klemperer in Berlin, this recent performance, particularly on the second night of its two-night metropolitan run, revealed the power, archaic asperity and monumental architecturality of the music. The liberties with the piece assumed by the conductor: the precedence of the Speaker's prologue with the fanfare of the Messenger borrowed from the concluding scene of the work, and the neglect of the repetition of the "Gloria" demanded by the composer, were justified by the necessities of the drama, and contributed to the fine effect of frugality by pointing and enacting it.

The arias of Jocasta and Oedipus were rich in tone as well as expression. The Harvard Glee Club sang with a fire and an amount of vocal color unusual in college choruses, and cheerful to those awake to the potentialities of American life. While Jones's twelve-foot effigies of the protagonists were in themselves only partially adequate, the contrasting shapes and relative positions of the static, blue-robed singers massed in green darkness at the left of the stage, and of the gaunt, tall puppets luminous above them to the right of the proscenium, were well conceived, nightmare-like and imposing. A recognition of basal messiness in a work experienced under conditions as favorable as these, could not but have authority.

It began developing as soon as the Speaker said, "Without knowing it, Oedipus is at cross-purposes with the forces which spy on us from the further side of the grave. From the day of his birth they have been watching him to set a snare for him into which he shall fall." The action had progressed but little before it was quite clear that Cocteau with Parisian light-handedness had grafted upon the Oedipus drama a plot entirely incongruous with the classic theme. The old tragedy conceives of fate as a subtle concordance of character and circumstance. The classic Oedipus is not the puppet of an external destiny. His catastrophe is largely the result of his own violence. The king who dashes out his eyes in his despair and shame is the violent son of a violent father, the offspring of an overbearing, high-handed family; as little a passive victim as the Shakespearean Macbeth; and if there is any "trap" into which he walks, it is in nowise separable from himself. Indeed, the antique destiny, in Aeschylus and Sophocles at least, was invariably the daughter of the deceptions, discords and ignorances of gods and men; never the action of hostile powers upon helpless creatures.

Cocteau's "poor Oedipus," nevertheless, "fell into the snare": in letting him do so, the librettist lost hold on him as a character, an actor; and all his princes, queens and powerful persons faded into abstractions. The references to past bloody deeds and deliverances became meaningless; the drama went thin. Jones showed extreme nicety in conceiving these protagonists as puppets; the automaton is nearer their nature than our flesh and blood. It is true that they are mysteriously ideal, phantoms and symbols of inward things. Oedipus himself at first had the appearance of the sense of ourselves we entertain in our pride; later, extinguishing like a suddenly defective electric wire, he resembled the sense of ourselves we have in our defeat and despair. We understood why the universe was "against" him. Yet the picture was incomplete and unsatisfactory on this inward plane; the protagonists as inadequate to an ideal drama as to a real one, to a Strindbergian conception as much as a Sophoclean. The trappings of the old fable of blood guilt were impedimental. At best, the puppets and the play embodied a heavy dreamfulness, an ominous imprecision; but Freud's Oedipean symbology has still to find its dramatist. To Cocteau himself, no doubt, his text may seem fraught with gigantic significations. But all his diverting efforts have seemed so since "Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel" convinced him of its Grecian quality; a fact thoroughly compatible with their slightness.

The sense of unclarity and confusion was doubled by Stravinsky's music, at odds both with Cocteau's decadent sense of tragedy and the idealism he does not quite dare espouse. Stravinsky's music is dramatic and realistic in spirit. He is depicting a real action. Each aria is a concrete portrait, constructed with large flowing lines, but strongly idiosyncratic and definitive of the character of a protagonist. The style of Oedipus himself is noble and uncertain, that of Creon military, forthright, brusque; that of Tiresias priestly, evasive, mystical. The changes of mood are definite; Oedipus' growing insecurity is marked during the suite of his arias; Jocasta's final terror is expressed with all the vehemence of Italian opera. Besides, Stravinsky's music is primitive in color, energetic and direct in the spirit of realistically minded people. It has archaic matter-of-factness, ruggedness, literalness. Those ominous stoical drumbeats, those square choruses and stark phrases—all this virile expression of fatal knowledge, is entirely irrelevant to Cocteau's whimper about traps laid by powers beyond the grave, etc. At the same time, it is entirely irrelevant to any idealistic conception of life; not at all like Schoenberg's flickering music or Debussy's fluid one. It is material, concrete, realistic; in spirit, at least, sympathetic to the antique tragedy.

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Yet it also is self-contradictory; adding a confusion. We have called Stravinsky's score primitivistic, rugged and objective, and so, much of it is. None the less, the effect of the music is not entirely happy, for the reason that Stravinsky has failed to achieve a style for the whole of his work. The unity of the score is too theoretical, too intellectual. While the better part of the choral music has a severe ominous quality, Russian in essence but sufficiently relevant to the Oedipean idea, many of the arias are incongruous with that heavy peasant-like quality of music. Creon's aria has Handelian bravura; Tiresias', Wagnerian exaltation and refinement; Jocasta's, vulgar touches of Bizet and of Verdi. The light Russian melody and rhythm of the Shepherd and Messenger come like something out of "Petrushka" or "Renard." Now, champions of Stravinsky have defended this medley of styles on various grounds: most ably with the pretense that since the business of the musician is to entertain us with music, any music that is entertaining serves his purpose and ours. To which the reply is, that carried beyond a certain point, inconsistency becomes troublous, and that the eccentricities of this score are extreme. Besides, some of this music is not only eccentric, but shoddy. It is probable that not even Rossini or Donizetti would have been proud of the dreadful chromatic organ-grinder triolets of Jocasta's second air. And the football-game music sung by the chorus and Messenger before the recapitulation of the majestic initial chords and drum theme, seemed absurd, abstracted from the grandstands during a rousing intercollegiate match.

No special wit is necessary for the discovery of the type of innumerable recent works of art in this product, ill starred for all its magnificences. Incompleteness, teasing by the very reason of the eminence of the material and the superiority of the control; unclarity and confusion of basic assumptions; adumbration of a "something not oneself" in the universe, a trap, a time, a pattern, out to "get" the I, the poet, the reader, and condemning him *a priori* to frustration, patently connect it with expressions such as the poetry of Eliot, the novels of Hemingway and the criticism of Brooks. Like these, the best of many works, it will seem to numerous persons not only in the mood of our time, but indicative of a general condition; a proof of its proper suggestion that something unfavorable to life and the arts is abroad, now or always. Evidently the product of rootless men, it will start anew the illusion that their very rootlessness is the result of a generally unfavorable environment. Yet these conclusions are not inevitable.

The incompleteness and confusion may well be demonstrations of that egoism which refuses a complete interest, a complete responsibility, to an object, work or partner. The fable of a trap, a hostile principle waiting to pounce, is certainly the expression of a timid or inhibited responsiveness, forced to rationalize its own laggardliness. And egoism surely requires no exterior cause. Indeed, the present turmoiled world constitutes a rather more favorable than unfavorable environment for artists such as Eliot, Cocteau, Hemingway. It gives their kind of message an apparent pertinency. It supplies them with a sympathetic audience, and lifts what are perhaps only great secondary powers to an eminence which less demoralized, more confident ones would probably not accord them.

PAUL ROSENFELD.

Respectable Productions

HENRI BERNSTEIN'S "Mélo" and Du Bose Heyward's "Brass Ankle" are both serious plays above the average. But that is not saying very much: neither is really first-rate.

The best part of "Brass Ankle" is probably the first act, in which a white Southerner holds forth vehemently to his friends against the mixing of blacks with whites in the schools while his mulatto wife whom he supposes to be white is having a Negro baby in the next room. Mr. Heyward has brought to this situation sympathy, intelligence and first-hand observation; yet he doesn't get so much out as one at first hopes he is going to. He has taken a subject which has already been made stereotyped in such old melodramas as "The Octoroon" and given it reality and dignity. But the imagination he has brought to bear on it is not of a very compelling kind. For a tragedy as violent as "Brass Ankle" to be effective, we have to identify ourselves with the characters, to live for the time pretty intensely in their world. (The mulatto wife, in order to rescue her older child from the disability of being known to have black blood, finally tells the husband that the father of the second child is a Negro and thus induces him to kill both herself and the baby.) The story holds your interest, but it doesn't turn the characters and the audience inside out as such a theme ought to do.

Bernstein's "Mélo" is a very suave and expert, and consequently not unacceptable piece of French commercial carpentry. M. Bernstein has been amazingly clever at appealing to everybody's sentimentality while appearing to be realistic and reticent. "Mélo" shows a truly marvelous understanding of men and women, not as they behave in real life, but as they like to be while watching a play in the theatre: he shows them themselves as they enjoy imagining themselves in messy or trying circumstances. A life-loving wife, married to a dreary husband, has a love affair with a glamorous violinist. As a result of this, she tries to poison the husband; but ultimately redeems herself by jumping into the Seine. The husband, who has married again, goes to the lover after her death and tries to find out the truth from him. The lover steadfastly lies, and the two men, who have both loved her so deeply, end by playing a violin and piano sonata together, as it were over her memory.

This sounds rather silly and it is, but so smooth is M. Bernstein's flattery of the women in the audience, to whom he has presented a woman who is unfaithful to her husband and tries to kill him, yet manages to remain not only full of sex appeal but greatly loved by both husband and lover, and who goes finally to a heroic tragic death—and of the men in the audience, husbands and lovers alike, to whom he has presented a husband and a lover, both greatly loving and both unmistakably loved, both conducting themselves irreproachably (the lover is full of honorable scruples) and ultimately reconciled to the sweet strains of the violin and piano sonata—so cunningly does M. Bernstein caress his audience that "Mélo" goes big on the stage. Miss Edna Best, as the wife, is extremely pretty and is always beautifully dressed in smart new clothes even when she is poisoning her husband or committing suicide in the Seine.

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The New School put on Wycherley's "The Country Wife" for a few performances and the production was mildly agreeable. The trouble is that "The Country Wife" is a very long and very rank Restoration play and that—amusing though it is to read—by the time it has been expurgated and cut for the modern stage, there isn't very much of it left. John Dunn did his best by Mr. Horner, the superb and cynical rake-hero, and made him both funny and imposing, as he ought to be; but in the environment of the New School, one kept thinking how much he looked like Lewis Mumford dressed up for a Beaux Arts ball.

Hasn't the New School got anything better to do with its progressive point of view and its bang-up modernistic plant than to go giving enfeebled revivals of Wycherley? What about reviving some of the old plays of the New Playwrights and Provincetown groups, certain of the best of which—Cummings's "Him" and Dos Passos's "Airways," for instance—deserved a longer life than they had? What about getting some of the new plays of the same authors which at this moment are going begging?

E. W.

CORRESPONDENCE

Leaders Wanted

SIR: Southern textile-mill towns just now are critical places in labor history. Unless a terrible repression is to take place, union organization must come, and when it comes, its success will be largely dependent on the character of the people who do the organizing. Pioneer Youth is seeking to make a contribution to this coming labor movement by exposing the present generation of children to experiences that will fit them to take part in a broad and vital movement.

This summer we are going to run five play schools in these towns. It is just a beginning; but promises to develop into something of importance. We are in search of leaders for these schools, able young people with a love for social adventure. We should welcome inquiries from any of your readers who would be interested in such an experience. It is a new departure in the field of workers' education. If interested write to me, care of Pioneer Youth of America, 45 Astor Place, New York City.

AGNES SAILER, Chairman,
New York City. Mill Village Play Schools.

Worse Than "Boners"

SIR: The New York Times' recent Current Events Contest listed Mooney and Billings among the names of those to be identified as having played a part in the news of the past year.

Twelve of the twenty-one undergraduates of Smith College who submitted papers did not attempt that identification—and the second and third-prize winners were among the twelve.

Three students, including the winner of the first prize, submitted adequate answers, and another merely remarked that the "petition to have them released from prison fails again."

For the remaining five who guessed or jested, any two names bracketed together in the news evidently would have served as well. Here are the results of their respective associative processes:

1. Sentenced to die by California courts due to "yellow dog contract" laws and unfortunate interpretation of injunction laws.
2. Engaged in a scrap concerning power control.
3. Insurgent Republican Senators.
4. Amos and Andy.
5. Movie (talkie) starring Marie Dressler.

We regard this record as a timely reminder that the interest of today's undergraduates runs not back to the early stages of the Mooney and Billings case.

Assuming that the results at Smith are not greatly out of line with those from other colleges, we suggest that here is a challenge not merely to interested college teachers in History, Government and Economics, but to liberal opinion everywhere.

Obviously, the story must still be told.

WILLIAM A. ORTON.
Smith College, MERLE E. CURTI.
Northampton, Mass. BREWER G. WHITMORE.

Breeding War

SIR: A perusal of many newspaper stories and editorials on the first series of hearings before the joint Cabinet-Congressional War Policies Commission amazed me—even after attending all of the hearings—not only by their failure to grasp the patent tragic ludicrousness of the testimony when projected against the Snell resolution itself, but also by the muzzling of the only important point brought out thus far. I refer to the revelation by Congressman Ross A. Collins of Mississippi that the War Department is gradually strengthening its hold on American industry to such a degree that should its program be completed, it will be in potential control of the nation's plants, factories, fields and transportation systems.

The irony of the hearings was further emphasized by Ralph T. O'Neil, National Commander of the American Legion, whose rank and file since 1922 have been plaguing Congress to "draft dollars as well as men." Mr. O'Neil testified that a 7-percent rate on private property in wartime would be "all right!" . . .

It would seem that since Congress, under the Fifth Amendment, may now take private property for public use during war, provided "just compensation" is granted, the resolution could only mean the taking of private property in time of war with or without something less than what the courts have considered "just compensation." Nothing, however, is further from the minds of most of the Commission; a fact which has been painfully evident throughout the hearings. On several occasions Representative Hadley of Washington emerged from soporific vacuity to remind the witness that the latter of course understood that what the Commission was considering was the elimination of war profits, that is, those profits above the usual peacetime ones.

As evidence of the ambitious plans of the War Department, one need only cite Secretary of War Hurley's announcement that 14,000 industrialists thus far have been commissioned in the reserve corps, and Colonel Robbins' statement that the War Department has made an intensive study of 10,000 factories and has made all arrangements with the heads of these factories in war contracts. Moreover, the War Department has projects for "the control of the price of labor" and "control of labor migrations" in its "Plan for Industrial Mobilization." . . . Newton D. Baker, former Secretary of War, showed the futility of the War Department's program by pointing out that "modern war is essentially and necessarily a process of improvisation" and that it is impossible to anticipate military needs by any definite program.

Discusson of "war policies" in time of peace is not only largely futile from the military angle but also dangerous because nourishing a war psychology tends to create a hypersensitive nationalism. In addition, such a discussion increases fear and suspicion abroad. Needless to say, a discussion of the world's economic resources and its market necessities would be far more to the point than the sophomoric saber-rattling performed by the chauvinistic Mr. Hurley, chairman of the Commission.

Where is the man who will come down to Washington for the hearings in May . . . to inform the Commission that if you can force a man to face spat steel or a vesicant gas in wartime, you can force a "patriotic" manufacturer to operate his factory without profits? Such a person might also suggest that if profits weren't assured these patriots, they wouldn't be so eager to precipitate the country into another struggle to make the world safe for something besides enormous profits.

SEYMOUR WALDMAN,
Associate Secretary,
National Council for Prevention of War.
Washington, D. C.

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Black Houyhnhnms

Jungle Ways, by William B. Seabrook. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 308 pages. $3.50.

MR SEABROOK derives "great comfort" from being able to state categorically and from first-hand experience that human flesh, broiled, roasted or stewed, tastes like "good, fully developed veal." Unappetizing as some readers may find this particular disquisition, it is essential as a key both to Seabrook's personality and to his method. His way of documenting himself on cannibals is to become a cannibal; not only to eat human flesh but to eat it with cannibals and as nearly as possible in the same frame of mind and for the same reasons that they do. Among the Gueré the motive for anthropophagy is purely gastronomic; so Seabrook ate his meat in the course of a "regular, evening dinner," washed down with a bottle of wine.

As in his previous books, religion and magic are Seabrook's chief theme. After "The Magic Island," he might have been expected to take his investigations of Voodooism in Haiti as a point of departure and to attempt to trace the picturesque beliefs and customs that he encountered there to original African sources. This he has not done. "Jungle Ways" does not pretend to be a complete source book of primitive Negro religions. There is no mention of Danh-Gbe, the great serpent-god, whose degenerated cult certainly survives in the West Indies; the genealogy of Papa Legba and the rest of the Voodoo pantheon remains unexplained. Seabrook is more concerned with ecstasy itself than with the creeds that envelop it. Undoubtedly he found links between the *mornes* and the jungles of West Africa. He speaks of barriers broken down by "preliminary initiations undergone in Haiti" and makes vague mention of performing "the somewhat unpleasant marassa mystery whose beginnings I had learned in Haiti"; but always reticences (which with a little imagination might be termed strange) intervene. By riding a hobby vigorously and stretching facts to fit a preconceived thesis, he might easily have filled in lacunae. But a man who practised fetich rituals, not out of curiosity or masquerade, but because he "believed in their magic efficacy . . . and felt safer and more at home in the jungle doing them," who shared the faiths and sleeping mat of a luxurious young Yafouba sorceress, and contributed to the entertainment of a good drinking bout by singing "Columbo" to a cannibal king, cannot hope to attain the arid, academic detachment of scholars corollating data in their studios in Cambridge, Heidelberg or Edinburgh.

Seabrook is a mystic rather than a scientist. Most writers on primitive religions treat their devotees as specimens, whose gratuitous motivations lie beyond either the possibility or the necessity of understanding. As for giving any key to the underlying nature of religions and their appeal to worshipers, their accounts are as inadequate as that of a traveler in Christian countries who should explain the faith of Paul Claudel or Dean Inge by observing that they worship the image of a naked man being tortured upon a cross and that their most solemn rite consists of drinking wine and eating bread which they claim to have been turned, by very unconvincing magic, into this statue's blood and flesh. Under Seabrook's humanizing treatment, on the other hand, cannibals and witch-doctors, even the Ogoun of Aru, "the wisest man in the world," on top of his almost inaccessible mountain, become rather more comprehensibly human than salesmen, professors and taxi-drivers; and their religious beliefs and reasons for believing them become correspondingly natural. Cutting a bull's throat on a relative's grave seems no more shocking than our custom of appeasing the wraith with gifts of flowers and elaborate headstones; little boys pouring millet broth over a gigantic phallic symbol seem no more barbarous than our own children learning the golden text for Sunday school.

Apart from his remarkable gift for friendship and his adaptability, Seabrook has an advantage in this type of reportage in that he actually believes in magic. Speaking of an ordeal by poison in which he participated, he says:

> We had before us a case of authentic, actual bewitchment, that is to say, black sorcery in effectual operation, whatever you may choose to believe black sorcery to be. The whole village believed that he was bewitched, and I believed it too. I mean that I believed it literally, without shifty materialistic-rational qualification of any sort.

Before setting out on his visit to the cannibal Gueré, he asked the oracle of a mummified arm and was pleased to find it favorable. On one occasion he did defy the injunctions of the fetich by going into Liberia; but even then he would not set out until he had obtained the fetich's assurance that he would not be killed. The miracle of a bridge rising without human aid out of a river he admits may have been accomplished by priestly mechanics. For several other mysteries he does not attempt any solution, beyond the not very comforting statement made in another connection, that "the more one learns the more one realizes how little he has learned . . . for that which is hidden is hidden and will never be revealed." Only when he is confronted with the very impressive miracle of baby girls impaled on swords without injury, does he make any stand against credulity, and even then his reservations are less the fruit of skepticism than a fresh act of faith. To fulfill his determination not to believe in a literal physical miracle, while admitting the factual occurrence of what he had seen, he can only suggest, as other investigators have suggested, that jungle sorcery may involve elements "which transcend what science knows of natural law." Previously he has developed the thesis that the concepts as to the nature of being held by scientists today are closer to the concepts of African witch-doctors than to those of our own scientific leaders of twenty years ago, a statement which seems credible enough when one remembers that, while our own medical science was still attributing malaria to humors and treating it by blood-letting, African witch-doctors were not only aware that the disease was communicated by the Anopheles mosquito, but were using this knowledge, in accordance with the most recent medical theories, in the treatment of paralysis.

In the matter of religions, Seabrook admittedly resembles the "men of Athens" whom Saint Paul addressed on Mars Hill: he is superstitious, and his pantheon abounds in altars to unknown gods. Yet one cannot dismiss him as a charlatan or a fool. Religious faith and superstition may both be products of a higher skepticism, which, confronted with a universe too heterogeneous to have any human significance, and understanding the hopelessness as well as the meaninglessness of any absolute knowledge, sets up as the criterion of the truth of any given concept the amount of satisfaction to be derived from believing it. It would seem that the more primitive a religion is, the more rational it is. Certainly none of the religious observances that Seabrook reports is quite so fantastic as the Sunday-morning

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services in any of our more liberal Protestant churches, where people united by no common belief assemble to hear a man, whose views and qualifications they hold in no particular regard, rhapsodize on some topic of current events.

At times "Jungle Ways" becomes a sort of "Gulliver's Travels." Accepted by the Houyhnhnms, becoming almost a Houyhnhnm himself, Seabrook inevitably draws comparisons with Yahoo ways. His satire in these cases is brilliant, impassioned and devoid of flippancy. His use of American idiom is successful even in serious exposition and is particularly effective as a medium for his humor—although such touches as the donkey-driving chauffeur who was sore because he had been crossed in his ambition to shoot a camel, and the *médecin malgré lui* story of the author concocting an aphrodisiac for a cannibal king, will be memorably humorous in any language into which they are likely to be translated.

"Jungle Ways" is a splendid book. It is even a better book than the jacket-blurb says it is. It could have been a truly great book—if it had been three or four times longer, if it had been encumbered with all the details and precisions that the author seems to have taken pains to spare the reader, if Seabrook had been able to give to its production as many years as he did months. But this is merely a rephrasing of a criticism uttered by a girl whom Seabrook met at Dananae and who could not possibly have known anything of the exigencies of contemporary American literature.

RAMON GUTHRIE.

Mr. Keynes's Recipe for Stabilization

A Treatise on Money, by John Maynard Keynes. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 2 vols. 787 pages. $8.

AMONG all the groups of theorists who have projects for the reform of our economic system, one of the best organized, most insistent and most vocal is composed of those who lay their stress on money and banking policy. Many of them are cranks, some of them are trained economists, and some of the trained economists are cranks. John Maynard Keynes, who is not a crank, is one of the most prominent of the money theorists, because of his shrewd insight into economic institutions, his capacity for brilliant statement and his successful participation in practical affairs. He comes as close to deserving the reputation of economic statesman in this realm as anybody.

When he publishes a two-volume "Treatise on Money," therefore, the reader is led to hope that here at last is a rounded and consistent statement of the whole matter. But the reader is bound to be disappointed. Picking up the first volume, anyone but a close student of money and banking, and anyone who is not already pretty well acquainted with economic theory and the mathematical method of dealing with it, will shortly be far beyond his depth. For Mr. Keynes evidently started out with the intention of developing a rigorously logical and detailed qualitative theory, which is nearly always stated in abstractions and at times rises to nearly solid pages of equations. Those who are capable of mastering this material at least well enough to understand what Mr. Keynes is driving at will soon discover that the qualitative analysis is so frequently interrupted by observations of the way the practical world really behaves that the development of the argument becomes confused and at times apparently inconsistent. And, in the second volume, which is intended to expound the applied theory, much of the previous analysis is thrown aside and a few leading observations are made to serve as the basis of the sort of policy which Mr. Keynes has already recommended many times—though he has modified that policy a good deal in detail.

In his preface the author, with his usual engaging frankness, acknowledges these defects, which emerged when he read the proof. He feels, he says, like someone who has been forcing his way "through a confused jungle. . . . The ideas with which I have finished are widely different from those with which I began." He warns us that his ideas, now the book is completed, are likely to change again. In other words, this is not a treatise, but a book valuable for its mental exercise, its insights, its suggestions. A formal treatise would have been difficult enough to review for the benefit of the non-technical reader. On a book like the present, a reviewer can hardly offer more than a few random comments.

If the reader wants a general conception of Mr. Keynes's principal thesis, he would do well to read Chapters 31, 37 and 38 of the second volume. Here it is set forth that the critical factor in producing the changes which Mr. Keynes is pleased to call the "credit cycle"—in other words, the alternation of boom and depression—is the relationship of savings to the investment of money in productive capital. Sometimes savings are greater than investment, sometimes less. This alternation creates inflation or deflation of profits, which in turn brings about fluctuations in the rate of production and employment. It all works out through the mechanism of prices: the sign of inflation of profits is of course a rising price level and the sign of deflation a falling one. The objective of banking policy ought to be to prevent, as far as possible, the unbalanced relationship between savings and investment. This it can do to some extent, Mr. Keynes believes, by altering the rate of interest and by increasing or decreasing the purchase of securities in the open market. How far the policy would be effective he is doubtful before trial. But at any rate a fair trial would demand certain reforms in banking structure and practice, as well as international control of credit.

Even this oversimplified summary exhibits certain differences from the more crude variants of the theory of monetary reform. It will be observed that the main emphasis, in assigning causes, is shifted from the price level itself to the use of money in production. And the policy is not simply a matter of enlarging or reducing the amount of short-time credit available to business—this is conceived as relatively unimportant, though people usually think of it as the chief function of the commercial banking system. The effect of banking policy on the bond market, on stock prices and yields, and on the interest paid on savings accounts and time deposits, is the main consideration. Mr. Keynes argues that this effect may be great, though many banking theorists will question his conclusion on this point.

Referring back to his earlier and more rigorous exposition of theory, moreover, one finds further complications. Mr. Keynes is by no means satisfied to accept so generalized a conception as *"the* price level." There are many types of prices; they move differently; which type should be accepted as the guide to stabilization policy? Mr. Keynes rejects the index of wholesale prices, which is usually selected for this purpose, and says, logically enough, that what we need is an index of the prices of goods and services at the point of sale to the individual consumer. A good "cost-of-living" index would appear to be the thing. No completely satisfactory index of the sort exists. Mr. Keynes recommends, as closest to his ideal, the "index of the general price level" of Mr. Carl Snyder of the Federal

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Reserve Bank of New York, which averages together wholesale prices, cost of living, wages and rent. To me, the inclusion of wages in a consumption index appears wholly illogical, in view of the fact that wage earners form one of the largest groups of consumers, and that they themselves pay little directly in the form of wages for services performed for them. The large weight given to wages in the index makes it fully as much an index of wage earners' incomes as of the prices they pay. In any dynamic economy, we may expect wages to increase more rapidly than retail prices in the long run, so that such an index as a basis of price-stabilization policy would seem completely futile.

In his second volume, Mr. Keynes abandons all thought of a consumption index, and falls back on recommending stabilization of the wholesale prices of commodities which bulk large in international trade. And one wonders whether stabilization of this sort would be effective in producing the right result, in view of the following combination of facts: Mr. Keynes expects that if this group of wholesale prices were stabilized, retail prices would show a rising tendency, and wages would rise somewhat more rapidly than retail prices; nevertheless, he makes the suggestion that in the United States, before the depression, the failure of the prices of manufactured articles to fall more than they did represented inflation, in view of the rapidly falling costs of production (which were due largely to more efficient technical methods and a failure of wages to rise very much). It is somewhat of a mystery how economic balance could be maintained without controlling all types of prices and wages as well.

Indeed, it is all very perplexing. Mr. Keynes is too good an economic theoretician not to want a simple and logical theory, but he is at the same time too good an observer of the real world of economic behavior not to see how complex that world really is. His two capabilities disturb each other. The moral of the whole thing is, I believe, that it is futile to attempt to stabilize a laissez-faire economy, which is by nature chaotic and full of a large variety of independent variables, by pulling one lever alone, even if that lever be banking control of money. I think that when so good and honest an observer as Mr. Keynes attempts to look at our economy through a single window like that of money, the net result is bound to be confused and unsatisfactory. The more economic science learns, the more confused and unsatisfactory such attempts will be. In order to elaborate a really good money theory, you must close your eyes to most of the facts and live in an imaginary economic world. It is really much more difficult to attempt to control a laissez-faire economy than it would be to attempt to plan an economy in all its important phases.

GEORGE SOULE.

Death in the Suburbs

To the Gallows I Must Go, by T. S. Matthews. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

SOME THREE years ago, Horace Liveright published a book called "Doomed Ship." T. R. Smith, the editor of the firm, swore by all the gods that it was genuine, written by Judd Gray in his Sing Sing cell and prepared for publication by Gray's sister Margaret, after her brother and Ruth Snyder had been sent to the electric chair for the murder of Albert Snyder. H. L. Mencken at once seized upon the document to write a disquisition on the typical Americano, such as Gray had portrayed himself to be: a commercial traveler (who sold corsets), a descendent of the "old stock," married eight years and ostensibly happy, a disbeliever in birth control, and still dominated by the moral ideology of the Presbyterian Sunday school. Gray did not tell much about his wife in his chronicle, an omission understandable for more reasons than one. He had notions about the sacredness of the marriage contract, in spite of his affair with Mrs. Snyder; but what is more important, he seemed to know very little, really, about his wife. They had never reached a stage of give-and-take; they were fundamentally mismated. Their one child was born soon after marriage; then they had no more. Gray was recurrently setting out on the road, or entertaining buyers in New York, and when he did come home his mother-in-law was there to greet him. He had loved his own mother intensely, and his new womenfolk did not come up to specifications. When he met Mrs. Snyder, she looked at him sympathetically, and he was a cooked goose. His autobiography tells how. There is a lot of liquor in it, a lot about Mrs. Snyder's charm and her love for animals. But there is little actual physical contact. The implication is that a yearning for sympathy was at the bottom of Judd Gray's defection. When the trial in Long Island City was over, and he realized that he had been only one of Mrs. Snyder's men, he reverted to his childhood views: he had gone to hell, he said, because he had not joined a church when he moved to his Jersey-suburb home.

I go over all this in detail because it is important to a good perspective on Mr. Matthews' utilization of the Snyder-Gray theme for "To the Gallows I Must Go." The main curves of Mr. Matthews' story, which is written in the form of a confession, follow those of Judd Gray's account. An average American, Todd Lorimer, finds that his marriage has degenerated into merely living in the same house with a cold woman. He gets hooked by a Mrs. Haxall, who uses him to the end of ridding herself of a husband. In other respects he differs from Judd Gray: he is less reticent about his relations with his wife, seems less afraid of writing about his sexual experiences with the woman he turns to, and is not insistent on the necessity for church affiliation—all of which makes him a less distracted character (though God knows he is distracted enough) and less baffling to himself. It also makes him less interesting to others. And for all his protested enchantment with Mrs. Haxall's animal sexuality, his absorption in the "other woman" is less credible than that of Gray. There is no mother image in the background to cast its paradoxically illuminating shadow, even though Todd's mother has helped along the estrangement by disagreements with his wife.

Mr. Matthews, then, has limited his dramatic reach in a form that was already limited when he chose to work in it. A confession can notoriously tell only one side of a story; it cannot be manipulated to bring out the light and shade possessed by any murder sequence if told from many sides, as in "The Brothers Karamazov." Judd Gray's account failed to deal adequately with the cross-play of Mrs. Snyder's motives, but he at least indicated—probably unconsciously—the prime movers in his own case when he brought in his mother-comrade stuff and described his early exposure to the "softer" side of religion. These being absent from Mr. Matthews' conception, "To the Gallows I Must Go" becomes a slighter, less moving document. It lacks, too, the convincing naïveté of the Gray confession. But it does show that Mr. Matthews can command a firm, blunt, competent prose style. Without knowing much about him, I should say that he has been fascinated by a theme that is beyond his imaginative powers—that would

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be, indeed, beyond the imaginative powers of anyone less than Dostoevsky himself. He has, perhaps, sought to be American and unliterary in his choice of material. In this, I think, he has been unwise; he will do a much better novel when he brings his own background into the orbit of his creative writing.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN.

Wanted: A Biographer

Lenin: Red Dictator, by George Vernadsky. Translated from the Russian by Malcolm W. Davis. New Haven: Yale University Press. 351 pages. $3.

Lenin, by D. S. Mirsky. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 236 pages. $2.50.

Lenin, God of the Godless, by Ferdinand Ossendowski. Translated from the Polish by Gregory MacDonald. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 419 pages. $3.75.

LENIN died on January 21, 1924. He has ever since been universally regarded as one of the greatest revolutionary leaders of all time and as a political genius who left his indelible imprint upon a whole epoch. His gigantic stature was recognized not only by the workers, peasants and party comrades who mourned his loss, but also by his enemies among the bourgeoisie and privileged classes of Russia and of the world who welcomed his passing in the vain hope that the proletarian state which he had built would crumble without his hand to sustain it. Seven years after his death, the time has still not come to measure the length of the shadow which his figure casts down the vista of history. Subsequent developments have merely made it clear that his role as the destroyer of one social order has been eclipsed by his role as the builder of another, and that a final estimate of his statesmanship must wait until the Red revolution which he led has achieved, or has failed to achieve, the goals he set for it.

But historical estimates are never final and the figure of Lenin, like that of other great leaders, will probably always be evaluated differently by different groups and classes and by each succeeding generation. In the large and growing Lenin literature, the reflective reader looks less for evaluations than for accurate and reliable accounts of the facts of his life and work. If it is too early for a definitive biography, one may at least look for some approaches to one. But unfortunately, in the words of Mirsky, "there is still no really adequate life of Lenin." His own "Collected Works," in process of translation into English, furnish both the specialist and the general reader with a deeper insight into his mind and activities than does any available secondary material, though they are in no sense, of course, an autobiography. In view of this situation, each new crop of Lenin books arouses anew the hope that at last some one has undertaken the task of presenting his career in systematic narrative form and in as objective and scholarly a fashion as the subject permits.

The current harvest is a curious one. Of the three authors, the first, Vernadsky, is a research associate in History at Yale, a native Russian, and the author of a history of Russia which possesses some merit. The second, Mirsky, is the emigré son of a prince, a student of Russian literature, and a lecturer at King's College, London. The third is the well known Polish writer of thrilling terror tales for the delectation of those in need of vicarious excitement and emotional stimulation. Strictly speaking, only Vernadsky's study pretends to be a biography, and even it is more a history of Russian revolutionary forces and parties than of Lenin's life. Mirsky's book is a short sketch, intended as a summary and an appreciation. Ossendowski's work, like his "Beasts, Men and Gods," is neither meat, fish nor fowl, neither biography, history nor fiction, but an unholy conglomeration of all three, suggestive of Hollywood, True Confessions or a Hearst Sunday supplement.

Indeed, the less said about it the better. Anyone seeking light on Lenin may consign it at once to the wastebasket or the furnace. It is a pure fabrication, written up as a novel and composed of long invented conversations, alleged episodes of Lenin's amours and blood-curdling accounts of fiendish Red Guards cutting off women's breasts, raping virgins, dashing out infants' brains and wallowing knee-deep in gore and filth. Lenin is portrayed as a clever and murderous Anti-Christ, perpetually tortured by remorse and by visions of the Savior, upon whom he calls in his dying delirium. The author's facility in painting horrendous word-pictures, calculated to furnish $10 worth of thrills and shudders for $3.75, is utilized only to insult the memory of Lenin and the intelligence of the reader.

The other two books are scarcely to be mentioned in the same breath with Ossendowski's. Mirsky's "Lenin" is sprightly, well written, reasonably accurate and of distinct value to the layman who desires a sympathetic sketch of "Vladimir Ilyitch." The author describes himself as an emigré intellectual, who has come to regard the Communists as "better patriots than the 'national Russians' who had allied themselves with foreign imperialism in return for help against their class enemy." Having accepted the Red regime as permanent, he now seeks to arrive at a just estimate of its creator. His chapter on "The Man" is a character sketch full of shrewd observations and incisive comments on Lenin's mentality and personality. Similarly, his final chapter on "Leninism" is a useful resumé of Lenin's political and social thought. The rest of the book is an undocumented survey of his political career.

Vernadsky's volume, for all its shortcomings, is the most important recent publication in its field. The author has brought together a mass of illuminating material which throws considerable light on Lenin's early political activities, the history of the party, and the inter-relationship of groups and leaders in revolutionary circles. The photographs, like those in Mirsky's volume, are interesting and pertinent. Vernadsky has made a sincere effort to assume an objective and detached attitude. He has in large part succeeded, though at times his anti-Bolshevik sympathies overcome his better judgment. One detects an undercurrent of bitterness, unrelieved by brilliant characterization and analysis and not always hidden beneath the dispassionate suavity of the academic historian. His concluding estimate of "Lenin as a Political Leader" is hesitant, confused, in places even naïve and, on the whole, less valuable than the corresponding portion of Mirsky's work. He apparently lends credence, in his notes at least, to the discredited "Sisson Documents" of 1918, which purported to show that the Communist leaders were mere paid agents of Germany. But in spite of these things the volume is perhaps the nearest approach in English to a usable narrative of Lenin's life and work.

At the same time, it is obvious that none of the three books under consideration is the Lenin biography that might now be written by some Russian scholar, gifted with insight into personalities and social problems and having at hand the enormous amount of material available in the Soviet Union. Vernadsky declares, in closing his study, "The future role of Leninism in Russia and throughout the world . . . depends upon the fate that awaits the Com-

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munist government in Russia and on this also depends history's estimate of the personality and political leadership of Lenin himself." But the biographical spade-work could be done at the present time, not by emigrés, whether converted or unrepentant, nor by frenzied fools perpetrating pot-boilers, but by some scientific student of scholarly attainments, preferably of Lenin's own nationality or at least with his own class interests and political views. Until the appearance of this biographer, the world must be content with such stop-gaps as are now available. FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

OUT OF SOUNDINGS, by H. M. Tomlinson. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 282 pages, illustrated. $4.*

The subjects of these essays by the author of "All Our Yesterdays" are various; they are really, or some of them are, the miscellaneous subjects commonly written of by familiar essayists —a pet owl, the curious events attendant upon giving a kindly pastor a microscope, the death of an author, in this case Thomas Hardy. But the essays themselves are not merely familiar essays. For in the mental approach, in the smooth wheeling along of the sentences, there is no indication of whimsy or fatuousness. Tomlinson's preoccupation with the late War is not a preoccupation common to essay writers. His "Footnote to the War Books" reiterates the immediacy of the War; he remembers it not as an earthquake might be remembered, but as the visible downfall of a civilization. And he expects others to forget it, except those who went through it, as they would forget the crash of an empire and remember a slight tremor in the vegetable garden. There is a good deal of pleasure to be derived from seeing the rhetoric, as heavy as the battleships it describes, of the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill's history of the War blown sky high. But the incident Tomlinson relates at the close of the essay is the most telling thing in it. The incident is so drastic that it may pass over the reader's attention and emotions; it has the quality, none the less, of C. E. Montague's "Rough Justice."

HISTORY

THE DREYFUS AFFAIR, by Jacques Kayser. *New York: Covici-Friede. 432 pages, illustrated. $5.*

All the mazes of the immortal *affaire* are explored and illuminated in this compendious work by the nephew of the great political martyr, who is also a well known political writer and editor and, therefore, quite competent for the historical labors involved. Although works on the Dreyfus case now fall as thick as autumn leaves, Mr. Kayser's seems like the scholarly and comprehensive volume which the situation cried for, ever since the discovery of Colonel von Schwarzkoppen's memoirs about two years ago. It presents Alfred Dreyfus in a rather sympathetic light, through liberal citations from his letters, although he seems more and more the helpless victim of a social crisis which, save for the minimum of bloodshed, represented a revolutionary struggle in France. M. Kayser is partisan to the Dreyfusards and permits himself too many cries of horror; this is not the best way of writing history; but then the final documents on the case are partisan, too. For students of European affairs, this is the best account since Joseph Reinach's volumes of twenty years ago; though more concise, it is also definitive, and puts a period, we hope, upon the battles of scholars which succeeded the battles of statesmen, as a sort of afterglow. The chronological tables, the various portraits and cartoons of the period, are also of great help.

A HISTORY OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, by F. A. Kirkpatrick. *Introduction by Harold Temperly. New York: The Macmillan Company. 282 pages. $5.*

"Dedicated by permission with great respect to H. R. H., the Prince of Wales," this book has apparently been published as an accompanying gesture to the Prince's visit to Argentina. It has a little of both the formality and the perfunctoriness of a gesture. Argentine history deserves a longer book; though in the short compass he has allowed himself the author has given a well balanced and readable account. The long introduction by Mr. Temperly is a record of the diplomacy of Canning, whose recognition of Argentine was a vital support to the emancipation movement throughout South America.

SCIENCE

THE LOGIC OF SCIENCE, by Harold R. Smart. *New York: D. Appleton and Company. 237 pages. $2.50.*

Unlike the cosmologists who use science as a jumping-off place from which to construct a system of the universe, Professor Smart has attempted a critical evaluation of the basic categories of the various sciences, bringing them into relation with one another and with other phases of human experience. The effort is praiseworthy, and the author at times shows flashes of insight, but on the whole the book proves sketchy and the main ideas are rather blurred. The discussion of contemporary physics, a subject on which the reader looks forward to philosophical illumination, is disappointingly weak.

THE PROBLEMS OF EVOLUTION, by Arthur Ward Lindsey. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 236 pages. $2.75.*

A critical summary of the present status of evolutionary theories, with the author's indications of the next steps to be taken in experimental investigation. Professor Lindsey writes in a vigorous style and does not hesitate to challenge accepted biological dogmas that overreach the experimental evidence. He believes that the main and fundamental problem of evolution is the inheritance of acquired characters. "Our task," he says, "is largely to determine the source of variation in an originally homogeneous heritage, and the response of the individual to its environment is too significant to be denied investigation. Mutation certainly does not explain: it is a recognition of a type of variation, rather than of the underlying causes, and until we have determined what causes heritable variations we have not exhausted the available field of investigation."

THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES, by Sir James Jeans. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 173 pages. $2.50.*

The book is well described in Sir James's own words as "an easy, readable and not overserious introduction to the most poetical of the sciences." Like "The Universe Around Us," it expounds the main themes of modern astronomy, but on a more elementary level. It has, however, the additional aim of getting the reader to enjoy the sights as well as the theory of astronomy. For this reason there are included in the book a guide to the sky, tables of sidereal time, charts and instructions.

FICTION

OKLAHOMA TOWN, by George Milburn. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.*

The author of these tales of an Oklahoma tank-town belongs to that hard-boiled school of younger writers who talk out of the corners of their mouths, use only simple declarative sentences and treat their characters rough. This method is not without its virtues, and in the present volume it is particularly effective when the author employs a drawling humor that springs straight from the soil. He has a native gift for story-telling, his colloquialisms are racy and picturesque, and in a number of stories whose plots are vaguely reminiscent of certain immemorial smutty jokes, he achieves a real Chaucerian gusto. In the more serious ones his hatred of small-town life occasionally turns his style sour, but on the whole his understanding of the badgered and unhappy characters with whom he deals saves him from that banal antagonism which descends on most young novelists when writing about their home towns. The book is always readable, exuberant in its curiously restrained way, and those of us who like to hear country tales told over a jug of cider will find extremely entertaining such masterpieces as "The Naked Waitress" and the harrowing story of the amateur wrestler.

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Contributors

DOUGLAS HASKELL, whose article was written in collaboration with a research engineer, was formerly an associate editor of The Architectural Record and is a frequent contributor on architectural subjects to Studio, Creative Art and other magazines. He is now writing a book on architecture.

PADRAIC COLUM, the Irish critic and poet, recently published "Orpheus: Stories from the World's Mythologies" and "Crossroads in Ireland."

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE, a student at Yale, is identified by an editorial note preceding his article on college liberalism.

MURRAY GODWIN, who worked in the Ford factory as a laborer and then as editor of the Ford house organ, is at present living in New York, contributing articles to various magazines and working over a book which, as he says, "explores the possibilities of the American temperament on the loose."

PAUL ROSENFELD, critic and novelist, is a graduate of the Riverview Military Academy, of Yale University and the Columbia School of Journalism. He has been a reporter on The New York Press and musical critic for The Dial, and is one of the three editors of "The American Caravan."

RAMON GUTHRIE, who served as an aviator during the World War, was the sole survivor of his squadron after an air-fight with a number of German planes. Since the War he has divided his time between France and the United States. He is the author of two novels and two volumes of poetry. Titus is soon to publish his translation of Rimbaud's "Une Saison en Enfer."

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, who is on the editorial staff of The New York Times Book Review, helped to cover the Snyder-Gray execution for a metropolitan newspaper.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN is a member of the Political Science Department of the University of Chicago and the author of "American Policy Toward Russia Since 1917."

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